

SPECIAL #8

The Magazine of Cult Television

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DOCTOR WHO



BLAKE'S 7



THE EIGHTIES SPECIAL

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The authentic '80s series

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Bole on shaping
the Next
Generation*

BLAKE'S 7

*Producer
Vere Lorrimer
remembers
the terrorists'
last season*

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*Three Doctors
take the series
through the '80s*

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD

*A production eye-view of
the filming of the series*



The old hand over to the new

Plus: WAR OF THE WORLDS, EDGE OF DARKNESS and BEAUTY & THE BEAST



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Editorial

Here we are with our eighth *TV Zone Special* — the first in 1993 — in which we continue our overall views of whole decades.

The Eighties proved to be a quieter time for cult television than the Sixties and Seventies, but was certainly not without its notable moments. There were quite a few beginnings, but too many endings. Find out the story of the Eighties in these pages...

Jan Vincent-Rudzki

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1980

The only home-grown 'straight' Science Fiction series to be broadcast in 1980 were *Blake's 7* (returning for its third season minus Blake, allowing Avon to take over as the focus of the action, and Paul Darrow to overact his socks off in the process) and the perennial *Doctor Who*. A strike at the BBC in late 1979 led to the cancellation of *Shada*, the final story in its seventeenth season, making *The Horns of Nimon* its swan song, a story not generally



The Martian Chronicles were relayed by the BBC, but proved rather disappointing

held to show the series at its best.

When *Who* returned in the autumn it had a new look, a new producer, John Nathan-Turner, and the emphasis moved away from overt humour again; but it faced a new challenge, as ITV ran the glossy, expensive-looking but trite *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*, starring Gil Gerard, in direct opposition to it, cutting the veteran series' ratings to a paltry four million. The new series of *Who* was the longest since the Sixties, albeit by two episodes, and the four stories shown this year ran from the visually innovative

opener *The Leisure Hive* through to a genuine throwback to the Gothic mid-seventies, Terrance Dicks' exhumed 1977 vampire script, now re-titled *State of Decay*. Also revived was the concept of the male companion, but the biggest shock for fans was in late October, when Tom Baker announced his retirement from the rôle of the Doctor after seven years...

Imported Space Opera also came in the form of *Battlestar Galactica*, which saw Space cowboy Lorne Greene fighting silvery Cylons. Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles* was a rather disappointingly flat dramatization, starring Rock Hudson. Various other series were shown in fits and starts in various ITV regions, including the short-lived, belated spin-off *Beyond Westworld*, the second series of *Project UFO*, bits of *Salvage-1*, and seven episodes of *Space Academy*, hidden away on Saturday mornings. The BBC contributed assorted *Star Trek* and *Wonder Woman* stories, but also began a welcome complete showing of the classic *The Outer Limits* in the wee small hours on BBC2.

SF comedy reared its head both in the form of the continuing adventures of *Mork and Mindy*, and the new ITV offering *Metal Mickey*, overseen by ex-Monkee Michael Dolez — which was the sort of show that gives both Science Fiction and comedy a bad name.

On December 9th, however, the BBC showed *The Flipside of Dominick Hide*, which was respectable in both areas, with Peter Firth as the eponymous Time-traveller and Caroline Langrishe as his bit on the (Flip)side. ATV similarly contributed a single genre single play, *Friends in Space*, about a group of UFO-spotters who get to meet an alien...

On the Fantasy/Horror front, there was also *The Hammer House of Horror* to get you hiding behind the sofa — or not — while often more effective were the cheap and cheerful *Tales of the Unexpected* from Anglia, which at least boasted one of the memorable title sequences of the era.

Buck Rogers woke up in the 25th Century, but was up against *Doctor Who*



1981

Every year has its less successful scions, and in 1981 these included **The Amazing Spiderman**, a 12-episode follow-on from the 1978 pilot which was released theatrically in the UK. **Wonder Woman** spluttered to an end, with the 80-minute 'special' **The Return of Wonder Woman** finally shown on January 1st.

Mini-series included the overly slick **Brave New World** and Irwin Allen's **Return of Captain Nemo**, starring respectively Keir Dullea and Jose Ferrer.

There were two more series of **Sapphire and Steel**, comprising three stories — although some regions didn't see the third, a murder mystery, until 1982. **Doctor Who**'s eighteenth series continued in January with Romana and K9's departure (K9 re-appearing in December in the only **Doctor Who** spin-off to date, the woeful **K9 and Company**), and concluded with **Logopolis**, wherein Tom Baker's Doctor fell off a radio telescope. However fans



The Day of the Triffids gave an impression of its '50s origins despite being updated to the '80s

Photo © BBC

were delighted by **The Five Faces of Dr Who**, the first season of old repeat stories which turned up in November, including the very first story and **The Three Doctors**. The fourth series of **Blake's 7** didn't begin until September, now minus the Liberator and Cally, and ended cataclysmically with the apparent deaths of the 'Seven' in a Federation ambush, including a resurrected Blake.

Other BBC programmes were far livelier, with Robert Holmes's adaptation of the David Wiltshire novel **Child of the Vodyanoi**, **The Nightmare Man**. It was a Horror Thriller mixing traditional elements with a red herring Science Fiction element and a cold war rationale... **The Day of the Triffids** was also serialised, starring John Duttine. It had a bewitching, oppressive atmosphere. Rather less straightforward was the three hour **Artemis 81**, whose cast included Hywel Bennett, Dan O'Herlihy and Sting.

HTV came up with the Time travel Fan-

tasy **Into the Labyrinth**, with two runs this year. Starring Ron Moody and Pamela Salem, it boasted writers such as Robert Holmes, Christopher Priest and John Lucarotti. Aside from a **Prisoner**-esque single drama **Sin With Our Permission**, ITV's only other SF productions were the feeble sitcom **Astronauts**, two further series of **Metal Mickey**, and Nigel Kneale's idiosyncratic comedy **Kinzig**...

The BBC's answer came in the form of the tv version of **The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy**. Douglas Adams' renowned meal-ticket. Doomed to be less awe-striking when you could see what was going on — the visual aspect killed some of the better jokes stone dead — it nevertheless tried very hard, and it was obvious a lot of money had been thrown at it. In many ways it came too early, the prime example being that the 'computer animation' effects for the Book's narration had to be done by old-fashioned cel animation — not a megabyte in sight!

The long and extraordinary Artemis 81

Photo © BBC



VERE LORRIMER is a traditional showbusiness all-rounder. He has leapt from one achievement to another and his career has touched all the bases.

Lorrimer was trained at Drama school in Light Entertainment (LE), and during the Second World War he featured heavily in the Army's Entertainment Unit. He later began work at the BBC in the early days of television for the presentation department and quickly graduated to dramatic children's programmes.

His background in comic sketches, singing and dancing (although, by his own admission, he was not very good at the second two) soon led him into the Light Entertainment department: "I produced the very first series of *This Is Your Life* and directed an enormous number of comedy shows. It was the very early days, even before the phrase 'sit-coms'. The BBC suddenly found themselves using actors in comedy programmes. In those days people at the BBC had had little experience with actors and I was put onto many shows having once been an actor myself. I worked on a long series called *The Life of Bliss* with George Cole and I did three series directing Eric Sykes.

"I also directed more episodes of *Dixon*

of *Dock Green* than anyone else which, at that time, was also part of the BBC's LE Department. *Dixon* was very much a 'family' show then but as time went on it became apparent that it had to become 'harder' in approach and so the LE Department became the Drama Department and that was how I got into drama.

When *Z Cars* came along that was a totally different sort of crime show and they asked me to work on that because I had the experience of *Dixon*. I then went on to work on its successor *Task Force*

and *Softly Softly*, with Stratford Johns and Frank Windsor, that show took on a very political angle. For many years I went on doing 'cop shows' and became very typecast as a director and consequently got rather fed up with the whole thing."

Into Space

"It was at this time that I went along to see the Head of Drama, Rodney Marsh, and asked to be put onto something differ-

VERE LORRIMER

Vere Lorrimer outside television centre

Photo © S Payne





Vere Lorrimer, seen here with the regular cast, produced Season 4 of *Blake's 7*.

Photo courtesy Mervin Connors

ent and he replied that there was a brand new show I could work on and it was set in Space... *Blake's 7*."

The first show Lorrimer directed was episode three of season one, set on the prison planet Cygnus Alpha: "The major problem with that story was it being set on this Moon. Now, moons should really have their landscape lit but the sky black, that interested me and so I decided to use a large back projection screen and projected a real moonscape, from stock footage of the Apollo landings, onto it. I hoped that would be a convincing and different way of doing it. I followed this with *Seek-Locate-Destroy* where the script had this secret base being guarded by a fearsome robot. The special effects department came up with this ridiculous looking thing that resembled Mr Plod in Toyland. It was absurd and so we kept its appearances to a minimum, it really looked like the sort of toy a child would pull along on a string. I edited it so that all you saw were a few flashes, you couldn't have imagined anything less terrifying!"

Villains

Seek-Locate-Destroy had also seen the introduction of *Blake's 7*'s major villains Travis and Servalan: "Travis had already been cast by the producer David Maloney

but we were also looking for a 'Queen of the Galaxy' and I had seen Jaqueline Pearce in the West End — she was absolutely right for the part. Servalan had always been written as a female rôle as there were already far too many male characters. She was comically sexually sensuous and she became very successful. We felt we needed a villainess who could wear outrageous clothes. That was a good draw for female viewers — to tune in and look at the outfits."

Male vs Female

Much criticism was levelled at the show from its main female cast who complained they had little to do other than stay on the ship and play with the teleport, while their male counterparts were always in trouble on some alien planet.

"If you look at shows such as *Star Trek* or *Doctor Who* the girls have a problem because they are denied there natural sexuality and that is one of the great attractions of women — they are lovely, gorgeous creatures but in Sci-Fi you can't really play love affairs between Blake and Jenna, not in that sort of show. Therefore, once having denied them there sexuality you are left with having to create characters which, in a sense, have to be limited. You can make one of them a sort of 'tough

girl/gun slinger' character and then where do you go from there? It is very difficult as no one in Outer Space has a job — you're not a cook, doctor, dentist or a career woman. Most films begin with a character, here is a woman who... but in *Blake* they weren't, they were all freedom fighters and one of the main talents you require to fight the forces of evil is the ability to pull a gun quickly! So there are a great deal of limitations already built into the characters to begin with.

"Cally, of course, we made into our telepath character, though Jan Chappell got very fed up with doing that 'glazed' look all the time. Sally Knyvette was our Space pilot but she left after Season Two because she had a little boy whom she wanted to look after. Then Dayna came along — we decided in advance to have a black actress and something of an athlete and Josette Simon was an excellent find, a superb actress! Then we brought in Glynis Barber who I'd seen in a show at the RSC, she was very attractive, feminine and I felt it would be nice to have another 'Jenna' type of female in the show, though it was very difficult to find a character for 'Soolin' at first.

"By the time we were half way through season four Glynis suddenly found a way of doing it; she played the character in a very flip way and then it became success-

ful. That is a big problem in something like *Star Trek*, for instance, some of their female characters are just backdrop and I feel we achieved more than that with our girls."

Blake-less

With the third season, the series had to move in a different direction as Gareth Thomas, Blake, had left the series: "David Maloney had already cast Stephen Pacey and decided that there was to be a totally different emphasis. Blake had essentially been a good guy and so there had been a sense of righteousness about the series, in as much as we were fighting for the future good. When Avon took over he was a pure bred bastard, out for himself and all the better if he could make money whilst he was doing it. His philosophy was totally self serving and so it set up a new series of adventures. Avon was ruthless and when, for instance, Dr Plaxton had saved their lives he had no second thoughts about sacrificing hers. Paul Darrow, being the actor he is, seized the character with both hands and turned him into one of those villains you love to hate, which is why he was so successful."

Despite the BBC's intention that Season Three would see the last of *Blake's 7* a fourth season went into production and outgoing producer David Maloney suggested Vere to take over the vacant post; "David informed them that I was the most experienced director to have worked on it and suggested they asked me. I didn't want to do it at all, it's much more fun being a director. Once you become a producer you have to worry about budgets and money that sort of thing but they



Avon (Paul Darrow) and Jenna (Sally Knyvette) in *The Beginning* Photo courtesy BBC video

asked again and as I'd never done it before it began to look like too good an opportunity to pass up, so I relented and said yes. But it was three or four months later and David had moved onto other things, so there was no handing over period.

"We had been told by management that Season Three was to be the last, I think they took far too much notice of the critics who had always knocked *Blake* — 'with its cardboard sets and wobbly monsters

etc.' Management get nervous about that sort of thing, but so good had the reaction been to Season Three that it became quite clear it would be foolish not to do another. And the first we knew of a new series was after the screening of *Terminal* when there came a voice over announcing a new series next year and it was a total surprise to us all.

"The *Liberator* set had been falling apart and it had always been too large for the studio, this had resulted in the decision to blow it up at the end of *Terminal*. There was no way to reconstruct it and I also felt that we had done enough stories in three seasons where our heroes had just managed to outrun the Federation in the *Liberator*. I knew we couldn't get away with inventing a ship that was larger or faster and so we went for the reverse and had the equivalent of an old steam ship with oil leaking from the pipes and chains hanging around. Making the heroes' lives more serious, so that there would always be a chance that they could be captured! Whether it was a good move or not, I just don't know, I think it was a good idea at the time. We also had the problem that after three series we were running low on ideas for new stories within the confines we had. I went over to visit Terry Nation in the USA, where he was working at Columbia Pictures. We talked at length about themes for the new series. We decided that as the heroes could no longer

Blake returns in the last episode and meets Avon Photo courtesy Marvel Comics



retreat from the Federation, as they had lost both Blake and the Liberator, that attack was now their only defence.

"Personally I dislike the doppelganger or cloning runarounds and I prefer good physical stories arising from human situations. I also believe that no matter how fast or far you go into Space and Time men and women essentially always remain the same. There are only slight differences in outlook, morals, ethics what is really different is the application of Science. I felt *Sand* was a good story because of that."

During Season Four we had also seen less of an emphasis on the Federation and Servalan as re-occurring villains. Had this been a deliberate move on the part of the new production team?

"Every time Servalan had appeared it always ended the same way, with the baddies being defeated and Servalan vowing to get Blake! What sort of threat do they become if she or the Federation are defeated every single episode. What you are seeing then is something similar to *Tom and Jerry* with knockabout characters. That is why you try to give it a sense of realism by killing off your regular characters such as Cally or Gan. We really found it difficult to keep putting Servalan back into the show week after week —

which is why she had very little to do in Season Four."

The End

The finale of the fourth season had seen Avon and company lose everything in a final shoot out but had the production team intended this to be the last of *Blake's 7*?

"We had been told that Season Four was to be the finish before we had begun work on it and so we tried to construct the season towards a finale. We had developed the scripts to push Avon towards total paranoia, more overbearing and liable to lead the crew into danger. But we had to leave the ending open ended as Terry Nation did not want his characters killed off, in case there was the chance of a spin-off series. I had also got fed up with ending every episode the same way with the heroes going off to a new adventure. I wanted to do something to finish the season that would get us talked about, something that might spark a demand for the show's return. Gareth Thomas wanted to be considered a serious actor and never appear in *Blake* again and he only agreed to do another episode if he was killed off totally and so we showed that there was

no doubt that Blake had been shot dead. However, with the others, they all fell as if they had been stunned and so we left it open as to whether they had been killed or not. There was no blood and guts as there had been with Blake. I felt this would stir things up at the BBC and it did the switchboard was jammed for days afterwards and people are still coming up with ideas and stories as to what happened next."

Lorimer has been continuously busy in the twelve years that followed the demise of *Blake's 7*: "I moved on to producing *Tenko*, which was a very prestigious show to do. I don't think I would have gone back to *Blake* had they decided to do another series, it's not a good thing professionally to be too closely associated to one programme for too long. I also run an actors agency firm and supply digs for actors across the country. Ever since boyhood I've been connected to showbusiness, it gets into your blood and here I am now at seventy-two still busy working, directing, writing and I thoroughly enjoy it. I have some very entertaining memories of *Blake's 7* and it was very important to me, it became Reality for me and life, at the time, was the Fantasy."

Graeme Wood

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DAVID BANKS CYBERLEADER

ALTHOUGH his name has only been associated with **Doctor Who** for twelve years, David Banks has now become synonymous with those deadly silver giants... the Cybermen. Since he took on the rôle of the Cyberleader in *Earthshock*, Banks has also successfully managed to enhance and recreate the legends and myths surrounding one of the Doctor's most popular adversaries.

Born in Hull, Banks was attracted to acting and writing as a child. He took a Drama course at University before moving to the Bristol Old Vic and completed several seasons of repertory until he moved to London and did his first television work, which included parts in various sit-coms and **The Professionals**.

Earthshock

"*Earthshock* I saw advertised in a casting report and went along to see Peter Grimwade [the director] to audition. He had a few lines of dialogue and he played, rather well I thought, the rôle of the Doctor. I had obviously been aware of **Doctor Who** as a child and I also remember rushing back from matinees, whilst acting, to watch Louise Jameson as Leela. I enjoyed the show and was aware of the Cybermen.

"I think my height helped me win the

part, I then went through a process of fittings for the new-look Cyber-costume. I met up with Mark Hardy, who was playing my Lieutenant, he was an inch taller than myself. We both had these cotton boiler suits fitted and these were then made skin tight. Peter [Grimwade] envisaged a long, gangling body for the Cybermen, similar to the creature in *Alien*. An Air-Force G suit was fitted over this and then sprayed with rubber and then with silver.

"The main problem we had with those suits was the helmet, which had to be screwed on and at first they used screws

which were too long and they bored into the back of your head after a while. It was very claustrophobic and very hot.

"The Cyberleader was quite a well defined character, which appealed to me and I also thought the story was excellent, very pacy and some very good dialogue. I came into it thinking I might find the show being diminished or derided by some of the people who had been working on it for a long time, but everyone treated it very seriously. In fact I was very nervous during the Producers run, as John Nathan-Turner was very serious about the whole thing and wanted to see the best

Wired to explode, the Cyberleader in *The Five Doctors* Photo courtesy BBC Video



All at sea, David with John Leeson

results achieved from what was, even then, a very limited budget. I think they had about £25,000 an episode to spend."

Cyber Recollections

"Peter Davison and the regular cast were very friendly and very outgoing. I recall chatting with Peter in detail about the principles of the Cyber race because all we really had to go on were our memories. I think Peter had watched the remaining three episodes of *The Tenth Planet*, the first Cyber story, and I had vague recollections of these nightmarish creatures with lamps on their heads, stockings over their faces and strange voices coming out of open mouths. Peter and I had both been frightened of the Cybermen as children."

Initially the new Cybermen and their scheme for revenge in *Earthshock* had come in for criticism from fans of the show. So how did David feel the new breed of Cybermen compared with their predecessors?

"I think *Earthshock* showed that their had been 500 years of development in the Cyber race and that their leader had quite a sophisticated point of view to put across. It was important for the Leader to be interesting to listen to. Many fans felt that the emotionlessness of the Cybermen had fallen by the wayside, but Eric Saward, the writer, wanted to move the Cybermen on and, I think, they had in many ways become callous because they lacked emotions in the sense of compassion, but they were moved by a sense of wanting to get somewhere. Any machine sophisticated enough must have a sense of what it wants to achieve and is therefore led in a certain way."

The latest Cyber-costume design



Vomit Highspot

The success of the new Cybermen was reflected in a speedy return for the 20th anniversary show *The Five Doctors*.

"It was a privilege to work with Patrick Troughton, I'd really admired his work as an actor. It was really nice that we were all together on location in Wales as we all did things together, like horse riding. I have this image still of Jon Pertwee. Whenever we had breaks Jon would always be at the head of the table surrounded by extras and people listening to these amazing stories he tells.

"What did become a highspot for *The Five Doctors* was the Cyber vomiting scene. I suppose because you see this very mechanical creature spewing something, which is a very human act. I suggested the idea and we used milk for the scene, I guess it was actually quite risky, as I could have choked on the milk inside the suit, but we did the whole thing in one take."

Sixth Attack

The arrival of Colin Baker as the sixth Doctor meant another encounter for the Doctor's deadly foes in the twenty-second season of the programme. "I met Colin Baker a month or so before on *The Russell Harty Show*, which we did with Peter Davison and a bunch of zombie-like fans who sat in the front row and wouldn't say anything. Colin was really friendly, right from the start, he really takes an interest in people and cares about them. I think Colin got a lot of humour out of his Doctor which people didn't take too at first. I think they may be warming to his him a

little more now. But he was a great contrast to Peter's Doctor, who was vulnerable and a little bland, whereas Colin was very brash and loud, especially his costume!"

"*Attack of the Cybermen* was a very confused story and, I think, overlong. Eric [Saward] was involved in the writing, but Paula Moore actually did the scripts. It was an interesting mix of trying to tie things together, but it failed. There was no attempt made to follow the continuity of the sets seen in *Tomb of the Cybermen*."

After Attack

"After *Attack*, I suggested a couple of storylines to Eric and he was very encouraging. I wanted to do another Cyber story with myself playing the Leader, I think that was so I would be paid twice, and I also set it in Crete, probably so that I would get a holiday! The second storyline I suggested has since become the basis for my 'New Adventures' novel.

"During the period between the show's hiatus and Colin's sacking, which I felt was very unfortunate for him and the programme, I met Adrian Riggleford who introduced me to the convention circuit. I really enjoyed attending conventions, though I restrict the amount I do now, I really saw them as a conveyance for meeting people and exchanging interesting ideas. Which is where the idea for my Cyber book came about, I wrote this between '84 and '88 and finished during recording of *Silver Nemesis*."

Celebration Encounter

To celebrate the show's twenty fifth

On location for *The Five Doctors* Photos © Stephen Payne



birthday new Doctor Sylvester McCoy was, once again, pitted against the almost unstoppable silver giants.

"I became heavily involved with the redesigning of the costume. Richard Croft telephoned me and wanted my ideas for making the suit more comfortable, I couldn't believe it. So we ended up with a softer costume — a bit too soft actually as it kept splitting at the crotch — and a larger helmet. The show had changed by this time and the audience was beginning to decline. Sylvester was, I think, just finding his feet, when he started he was landed with Bonnie Langford as a companion. Bonnie, I feel, is a very good pantomime performer but not right for *Who* and *Doctor Who* at its very worst becomes pantomime!

"*Silver Nemesis* was meant to be very different and very adult, dealing as it did with Neo-Nazis, and the Cybermen were there to contrast this. Sophie Aldred was very outgoing and I think one of the contributions that Ace brought to the show was that she was her own person, very real and an active force. So I think you could forgive the use of gold coins to kill the Cybermen simply because it was Ace in a battle against these huge monsters.

"In terms of story it was all a bit cobbled together, it was always meant to be four parts and a great deal was cut out, a lot of explanatory stuff. It will be interesting to see the extended version when its released on video."

Related Projects

The abrupt hiatus of *Doctor Who* did not prevent Banks being involved with related projects and the first of these was the 1989 stage play *The Ultimate Adventure*.

"Again it was Adrian Rigglesford who told me about it, and I got my agent involved. I wanted to do something in it, but not play a Cyberman, so I went for the rôle of the resident baddie. It was great working with Jon Pertwee again, and they asked me to understudy the rôle of the Doctor. I did so, but only on condition that I could choose my own costume and be my own Doctor. Consequently Jon fell ill in Birmingham and I became the eleventh actor to portray the Doctor. The audience were great and, of course, there was the drama of the understudy stepping in to fill the lead part. Colin Baker then took over from Jon and put lots of bad jokes into the script to make it more suitable for his Doctor, but we had a great time and there was very much a family feeling to it all.

"I then produced several audio interview with Jon, Sylvester and Colin and I think Colin's especially was very good as we just chatted, and a lot more came out



David Banks, in the flesh (and T-shirt) Photo © Marion Bruce

of that then from a standard interview. I've got a bit fed up with those now, although I would like to do one with Sophie because she is such a phenomenon."

Banks also landed a major rôle in the Channel Four soap *Brookside* which gave him recognition, especially when the his character became involved in one of tv's most famous murders.

"It was fascinating because I'd never done a part like it before, where you don't know how the character is going to turn out. All I had to go on were the first few scripts and what I was told, that Graeme Curtis was a charming lawyer who eventually falls for Terry's wife Sue. I had no idea he would turn out to be such a strange character and an emotional cripple. It was a great rôle and very enjoyable, though very strange when my character became accused of murder. People's reactions in public became very tense."

Back to Who

It was back to writing and *Doctor Who* for Banks's next project and his forthcoming 'New Adventures' novel.

"Whilst doing pantomime with Sylvester McCoy, I spoke to Virgin Books

editor Peter Darvill Evans firstly about a sequel to my first Cyber book *CyberMyth*, which Peter rejected though I would jump at the chance to take another serious look at *Who* again and, secondly, about the possibility of writing one of the 'New Adventures' novels. I had heard that these were more broader Sci-Fi books and it took two and a half years for Peter and I to agree on a basis for the novel. Very cleverly, he's worked it out so that I can write a 'stand alone' story and yet still be fitted into the ongoing series.

"The novel is set in 2006, which is 20 years after *Tenth Planet* was set and its a re-examination of those Cybermen and a reminder of the *Invasion* Cybermen who, chronologically speaking, arrived on Earth first. I'm really interested in dealing with real life apprehension and environmental concerns — it's real people in a real world, dealing with a nightmare vision... Cybermen. I want to preserve the tradition of the Cybermen, its set in the South Pole and I've managed to lose Bernice and Ace and concentrate more on the Doctor and my own heroine Ruby. It's called *Iceberg* and its due out in September."

Graeme Wood

1982

For some reason there was precious little new Fantasy television in 1982, perhaps because the renewed interest in the genre sparked off by the desire to cash in on *Star Wars* had finally run out of steam. Most

of what there was were continuations of old series, much of the rest was half-hearted imports. The inimitable *Metal Mickey* finally bit the dust after its fourth season, while *Into the Labyrinth* didn't survive the loss of Ron Moody for more than one run. Even the imaginative *Sapphire and Steel* came to an end with a four-episode fourth season, with the Time detectives locked in a transport cafe for all eternity (what a way to go).

Doctor Who at least was instilled with new life with the arrival of the fifth Doctor, although Peter Davison's whimsical yet repressed portrayal was not to everyone's taste. Many viewers could not easily accept any Doctor who was not Tom Baker, despite Davison's familiarity from *All Creatures Great and Small*, but the 19th season tried to win them back with the Master (twice), new monsters, old favourites the Cybermen, and by killing off Adric, the Doctor's thespically challenged

The fifth Doctor started his innings...



The Avengers has a long overdue showing on Channel 4

companion. The previous year's *Five Faces* were followed up in the summer by *Doctor Who* and *The Monsters*, a trio of colour adventures on BBC1; the recently restored *The Curse of Peladon*, a butchered version of *Genesis of the Daleks* and *Earthshock* (featuring Adric's demise and the Cybermen), all in double-length episodes.

The BBC repeated *The Flipside of Dominick Hide*, followed a week later by its sequel, titled *Another Flip for Dominick*, but it didn't quite match the innocent charm of the first — it's perhaps as well that the suggested idea of a series wasn't followed up. The plays department also produced six single dramas under the title *Play for Tomorrow*, which naturally varied in quality and imagination, but it was an interesting experiment: the first SF anthology series since *Out of the Unknown*. The best of the six were Caryl Churchill's *Crimes*, and Graham Reid's *Easter 2016*, featuring minor rôles for *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s Colm Meaney and a young Kenneth Branagh. Even the more comic entries were of the doom-laden turn of mind.

ITV screened a two-part mini-series called *Goliath Awakes* during the summer, about a community that has survived after the sinking of a liner by a U-Boat, starring Christopher Lee. Their only other Fantasy material was composed of the Japanese puppet show *Star Fleet*, and *Jason of Star Command*, a lame live-action series notable only for the periodical appearances of James Doohan. Early-morning BBC viewers could meanwhile enjoy the 1939 Buster Crabbe *Buck Rogers* serial, a far cry from Gil Genard who was still making the odd fleeting appearance on the other side.

On the subject of other sides, Channel 4 began broadcasting in November, and from its first week began showing the first colour season of *The Avengers*, the first of many cult shows it would repeat or initiate...

1983

The year's new shows included **Captain Zep - Space Detective**, starring Paul Greenwood, solving various Space crimes with the help of a studio audience of children, with artwork depicting the alien characters and settings. **Luna** was a more

straightforward children's series, although it boasted a complex future-speak, which resulted in episode titles like *It Isn't How You Vict or Flunk But How You Co-participate*. Surprisingly witty, from the team responsible for **Metal Mickey**, the series starred Patsy Kensit in the title rôle. Unfortunately Gerry Anderson's new series **Terrahawks** was far less entertaining, on a far greater budget. Trying to mimic the success of **Thunderbirds**, it had all the excitement and flair of **Rainbow** on a bad day.

Kolchak - the Night Stalker was a far-fetched American series derived from two tv movies, **The Night Stalker** and **The Night Strangler**. Each episode featured the eponymous reporter (Darren McGavin) fighting a supernatural enemy, and was enlivened by cross-talk between Kolchak and his editor, and by Kolchak's own wry narration. Although made in the mid-70s, its partial showing, in the usual late night slots on ITV, was the series' first British transmission. Channel 4 began to

Captain Zep started his detections... Photo © BBC



Doctor Who celebrated its twentieth anniversary From the BBC Video *The Five Doctors*

re-screen **The Prisoner** towards the end of the year, albeit in the wrong order. They also contributed the musical play **Face Lift**, which was fairly uninspiring, despite the efforts of star Martin Shaw, but it merited a repeat on ITV the next year. The BBC began showing **The Twilight Zone**, but although it continued until 1985 not all the episodes were screened. **Doctor Who** was, disappointingly, accorded no out-of-time repeats this year, only three stories from the 1982 season.

Doctor Who's twentieth anniversary was in November, and the BBC planned celebrations including a convention at Longleat. The twentieth season featured something from the past in each story, although 'the past' could be as recent as a year, as with **Snakedance**. The first story, **Arc of Infinity** featured Omega, from the tenth anniversary story, but was a third-rate tale with pointless Amsterdam location filming. Three stories featured the **Black Guardian**, and the first story of them, **Mawdryn Undead**, rode roughshod over the show's continuity to cash in on it... A strike at the BBC forced the cancellation of the final story, which was to have featured the Daleks. The planned anniversary special **The Five Doctors** went ahead as intended. Although unable to include possibly the most famous Doctor, Tom Baker, and with an ersatz first Doctor, writer Terrance Dicks managed to capture some of the old magic. In the end, the BBC put the show out two days late, as part of the **Children in Need** telethon—a station in Chicago screened it first, on the 23rd.

Meanwhile, on the fringes of Fantasy, the first series of **The Black Adder** emerged, co-written by its star Rowan Atkinson with Richard Curtis, and featuring Peter Cook as a ghostly Richard III, and Frank Finlay as a devilish Witchsmeller Pursuivant.

"Nobody dances like the British. They deserve the Falklands."

EDGE OF DARKNESS has become a legend among drama serials. Seamless, perfect, it has repelled all criticism and become a beacon in the darkness of the BBC's current troubles: a reminder of better times when British drama was the envy of the world. The transmitted version is available on video, the script has been published by Faber & Faber, and the Institute of Contemporary Arts honoured it with a retrospective discussion. Considering the amount of conflict behind the scenes and the number of people trying to put their oars in, it's a wonder the series ever got made at all.

Repeats and Awards

One of a number of non-naturalistic dramas produced by the BBC at the time (including *Dead Head*, *A Very Peculiar Practice* and *The Singing Detective*), *Edge of Darkness* was first broadcast in six one-hour episodes during November and December 1985. Critical and public reaction was immediate — and positive. The series achieved an average audience of 4.5 million viewers and an appreciation index of 82 on the BBC's own rating system (where the standard score for a drama series was 75). Michael Grade, then

Controller of BBC1, was reportedly so impressed that he wanted to clear the schedules on the Saturday night following the final episode and repeat the whole series straight away. Although this proved impracticable, *Edge of Darkness* still became the second quickest repeat ever shown by the BBC — the record being held by an episode of *Stepfather and Son*. The repeats, contradicting accepted wisdom, reached twice as many people as the initial showing. Early the next year, *Edge of Darkness* won three BAFTA awards (Best Drama Series, Best Actor, Best Original TV Music) and was nominated for three more.

Genesis of a Classic

Edge of Darkness (originally called *Magnox*, then *Dark Forces*) was devised and scripted by Troy Kennedy-Martin (co-creator of *Z-Cars*, and one of the writers on *The Sweeney*, produced by Michael Wearing (who also produced *Boys from the Blackstuff*) and directed by Martin Campbell (who had worked with Troy Kennedy-Martin before on *Reilly, Ace of Spies*). On the surface, it has a simple 'paranoia and chase' theme which betrays the origins of its writer. It concerns policeman Ronnie Craven (in a brilliantly understated performance by Bob Peck), whose daughter Emma (the first major rôle for Joanne Whalley) is shot down by a crazed IRA gunman. Craven assumes that he himself was the intended victim but, while investigating his daughter's past, he discovers that she had been part of the Gaia organisation — an ecological group who broke into the Northmoor Nuclear Reprocessing Plant in order to obtain evidence of illegal plutonium storage. Wanting revenge for what he now sees as Emma's cold-blooded murder, Craven, haunted first by his memories of Emma and then by her spirit, is approached by flamboyant CIA agent Darius Jedburgh (US second-string actor Joe Don Baker in a part that really allows him some latitude), who is also interested in Northmoor. Together, he and Craven follow in Emma's footsteps, break into Northmoor and steal the plutonium. Jed-



EDGE OF DARKNESS

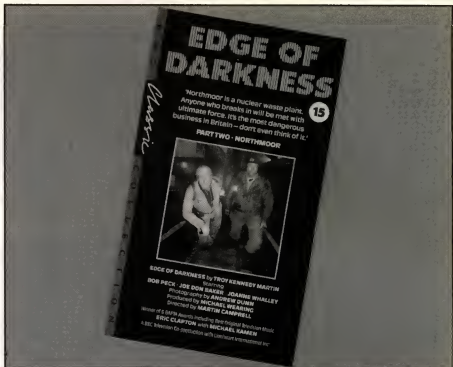
burgh, under orders from his superiors, takes the material and vanishes. They meet again in a deserted Scottish farmhouse, both of them dying from radiation poisoning, ready to make a stand against the dark forces that are taking control of the planet.

Full of rain-smeared reflective glass surfaces which either frame or hide the protagonists, and black silhouettes which pass close to the camera lens and obscure the action, Martin Campbell's directorial style suits Kennedy-Martin's deliberately non-naturalistic and multi-layered script. The implication that Jedburgh and Grogan (the primary villain of the piece) are carrying on a conflict that has existed between two secret organisations for centuries is buried somewhere within the story, as is the suggestion that Craven is a reincarnation of an ancient woodland spirit, sent back to curb the forces of "modern entrepreneurial capitalism".

Creative Conflicts

It was the creative conflict between the disparate approaches of Kennedy-Martin and Campbell that effectively defined the structure of *Edge of Darkness*. Kennedy-Martin was an incessant rewriter who often started in the middle of scenes, in the middle of episodes, and worked his way outwards, frequently discarding material and avoiding excessive and 'naturalistic' dialogue in favour of a sparse, stylized approach. Campbell, as director, wanted a more realistic series, with all the plot points explained and — according to Kennedy-Martin — "just reams of dialogue". Given all the time they required, it's probable that nothing coherent would ever have emerged.

With only a limited schedule, and with Troy Kennedy-Martin still writing the later episodes while the first ones were being filmed, a compromise was adopted. Both men had to drop some of their cherished ideas. Campbell's conviction that Jedburgh was an undercover KGB agent was abandoned, and Kennedy-Martin, who had never intended that Emma should appear on screen after her death, or be any more than a figment of Craven's grief-ridden mind, picked up Campbell's idea of making her a ghost and enthusiastically ran with it. Contradiction and confusion still abound, however. Kennedy-Martin wrote much of *Edge of Darkness* as if Craven had full knowledge of Gaia's plans. Campbell directed it as if Craven knew nothing of what was going on, and was discovering the truth along with the audience. This divergence pivots around the (frequently reprised) scene where Emma Craven is blasted down in front of



Edge of Darkness is still available from BBC Video

her father. Her last words have two meanings: neither meaning makes any sense nor is explained. And who exactly did hire the gunman who shot her down?

Perhaps there is a danger in making drama too slick, as *Virtual Murder* recently showed. Due to the circumstances of its making, one almost feels that the cast and crew of *Edge of Darkness* were on a

journey of discovery along with the audience. If the BBC want to retrench their position and concentrate on what they do well, rather than attempt to compete with the commercial companies on every level, they could do worse than to use this programme as a model.

Edge of Darkness 2, anyone?

Andrew Lane

TV ZONE

Issue 39 - Now Out

The monthly companion of *TV Guide* and *TV Times*

As *The Prisoner* on Channel 4 comes to a close, we complete our episode guide. We also start our celebrations of *Doctor Who*'s 30th Anniversary with a special pull-out poster (shown here); part of a mega-poster for the year. Episode 1 of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* is reviewed, Michael MacKenzie (*Ace of Wands*) is interviewed, there's a Fantasy Flashback to *The Tomorrow People*, and there's our acclaimed news and reviews...

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Beauty and the Beast

The Concept

CATHERINE CHANDLER (Linda Hamilton) is an assistant district attorney who stumbles onto a huge and secret underground civilisation beneath the streets of New York City. After being rescued from danger by Vincent (Ron Perlman), an intelligent half-man half-lion, a love develops between them and he becomes her protector in the weekly adventures that follow.

Vincent's make-up, which effectively made Perlman look both grand and formidable, was designed by Rick Baker, whose other work includes the memorable *Werewolf* series and its predecessor in spirit, the 1981 feature *An American Werewolf in London*.

Most American tv series have their origins in some other medium — radio, film, books, comics — and *Beauty and the Beast* is no exception. The original French fairytale of *Beauty and the Beast* (dating back to the 1780s) and the famous 1946 Jean Cocteau film of same are most commonly cited as being the inspiration for this series — the recent Disney version, which has perhaps put paid to any cinematic outing for Vincent, has been preceded by at least three others — but I would suggest that one only has to look at the title, chronology and publicity stills of the 1986 feature *Labyrinth* to guess at the true inspiration.

Another catalyst was quite possibly *Mansion of the Beast*, an episode of the obscure and short-lived *Otherworld*, a promising Fantasy series smothered at birth in 1985 (see *Starburst 105*, May 1987), but which, in its short life produced a Cocteau-inspired *Beast* romance.

The Cast

Ron Perlman was cast in the series for his already considerable experience acting beneath a ton of make-up. As well as



The Classic pose, with a rather sultry Catherine

appearing in the Fantasy film *Ice Pirates* (1984), he had endured long stretches in heavy and uncomfortable disguise in *Quest For Fire* (1981) and *The Name of the Rose* (1986). Linda Hamilton has since become best known for her rôle as Sarah Connor in *The Terminator* films. An early rôle included *King Kong Lives*

(1986), and tv included a *Hill Street Blues* storyline.

UK Broadcast History

Although not a fan of this series — and I'm afraid that's putting it mildly! — I wouldn't wish the fate of this show on any

tv series' fans. Boded by LWT, who brought it on the strength of the pilot for the Friday teatime slot, only to find it didn't suit them, and butchered by its own creators after a major cast change, **Beauty and The Beast** started its three season life as a nightmare turned fairytale, but ended three years later as a fairytale turned nightmare for its fans.

LWT's problems started when they bought the series for Friday night family viewing, proudly telling anybody who would listen that it was going to be 'the next **Incredible Hulk**'. While it was no better or worse than anything else this shabby bunch have inflicted on their viewers, it was more esoteric than expected, and hardly suitable for the lowbrow Cilla and Beadle crowd of dimbos and grannies that ITV courts so successfully. It was also more violent than they first thought, and they proceeded to slice and dice all the action sequences, eventually consigning entire episodes to the late-night graveyard. ITV keeps ready for any American series not called **Murder She Wrote**.

Further embarrassment followed when they announced the new schedule to the advertisers who are their bread and butter — by the way folks, when ITV butchers a film or series don't write to the deadhead TV company involved, send your letters of complaint to the advertising trade press; *Marketing*, *Marketing Week*, *Media Week*, *Campaign* and watch ITV trousers dampen when you tell their real customers, the advertisers, why you won't be watching.

While almost everything else in LWT's line-up was praised to the heavens, '**Beauty and The Beast** was met with universal horror' reported *Media Week*. "If that runs for 22 weeks, I'll eat my tv schedule" announced one time-buyer. (This was a pretty safe bet, as ITV buy-ins rarely stay in the same slot uninterrupted for more than three weeks, even if successful!)

US Broadcast History

In the US, the result — from the audience at least — was a little more positive, and when CBS launched a poster campaign for **Beauty and The Beast** and **Wiseguy** in the New York subway system, they made the mistake of putting up gorgeous cardboard displays; all the boards of the Two Vinnies were quickly, cleanly and efficiently spirited away by collectors within two weeks, carefully removed and taken home by happy fans!

At the close of the second season, Vincent is told by his father that the animal side of his nature is beginning to dominate, and as savagery overwhelms him he



The 'beast' who proved to be very popular

flees into the darker recesses of their subterranean hideaway. The idea was to somehow hold on to the devoted hard core of mostly female viewers who tuned in for the romance between Vincent and Catherine while beefing up the action content to attract absent men and kids. The rather obvious result of this was that the missing millions stayed with the shows they were already watching — the brilliant **Perfect Strangers** and the soppy **Full House** — and the fans of the show watched the gentle and magical environment they immersed themselves in faithfully every week turn into a blood-soaked abattoir of misery and disaster.

The third season opened with the perhaps inevitable birth of a baby to the temporarily happy couple before Catherine is killed off by the villainous Gabriel (professional tv loony Stephen McHattie). Actress Linda Hamilton had left the series to raise her own baby, and gave the producers advance warning of this. There have

also been rumours that she was unhappy with the development of the series. She was replaced with Jo Anderson as police investigator Diana Bennett, who joined the series to investigate Catherine's death and subsequently struck up a relationship of her own with Vincent. Previous recurring villain Paracelsus, played by Tony Jay, had also been dispensed with.

Now the Beast has some avenging to do... Calling the concept 'relatively courageous', *Hollywood Reporter* noted that 'Art direction is up to its usual high standard and the score is a major plus... cinematography is arty where appropriate, almost up to theatrical quality at times'. As the twelve continuing episodes of the series' third and final season went on, almost all of the supporting cast began following in Cathy's footsteps and dropping like flies. Using the old comic-book philosophy that if sales drop or a new avenue is explored, slaughter the cast, the series' new producers dispatched them all to the graveyard.



Ron Perlmutter out of costume Photo © Janelle Hyman

But it was all in vain. By Christmas 1990, new episodes of *Beauty and the Beast* were being thrashed in the all-important ratings by very mundane competition including *Unsolved Mysteries* and *Growing Pains*. Although the network executive who had commissioned and supported the series left CBS at this time; it would have been a brave new broom indeed that didn't sweep the show out with those sort of figures. "No big conspiracy" agreed series creator Ron Koslow, who had left the series to work for a rival network, "just a matter of numbers". And a collection of bad ideas and wrong decisions.

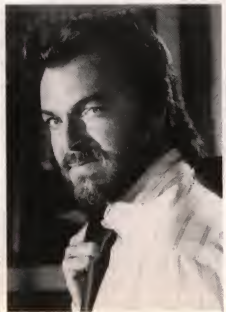
Although it may seem difficult for the die-hard fans to believe, the decision to bump off Catherine was a rational one that

Gabriel (Stephen McHattie), the leader of a vast criminal empire



had been reasoned out. Splitting the couple up, having her 'disappear' in an ongoing sub-plot, and recasting the rôle had all been considered and dismissed for good reasons; I believe that the producers could have got away with recasting Catherine bearing in mind that fans would have known that Linda Hamilton was unavoidably leaving the series, and that bumping off Cathy was the only other alternative. Replacing Ron Perlmutter would have been unthinkable, but Catherine was really only a figure for the female fans to identify with — Hamilton was not physically unusual or unique, and I believe that it was the magic, mystery, and the idea of romance that sustained the show, and that the fans would have accepted a new actress in the rôle. There might have been a flurry of

A rival for Vincent, tycoon Elliot Burch (Edward Albert)



discontent and consternation over the change, but nowhere near the violent reaction to the drastic changes that were implemented. But then I'm no fan.

The decision to do away with Chandler turning the audience's wish-fulfillment fantasies into a bad dream tragedy, the writers planned to gradually phase in the new romance while Vincent searched for a 'missing' Cathy, but the network — perhaps wisely — insisted insisted the whole new direction be dealt with straight away in a two-hour tv movie. After all, everyone knew Hamilton was leaving. However, it's doubtful that either approach would have bought the series success — female viewers were unlikely to want to identify with 'the other woman', or approve of Vincent replacing her so quickly. Any way you look at it, Diana Bennett was her replacement in Vincent's affections. It's perhaps telling that the decision-makers on the show were all men.

Betrayal

Exactly how any show could so brazenly betray its audience in such an extraordinary way remains a mystery. It's not unusual for a network not to understand why they have a hit show on their hands — in fact, it's the norm, with every great show from *Star Trek* and *The Twilight Zone* to *The Rockford Files* and *Hill Street Blues* having to fight the very people the show will financially reward to stay true to itself and succeed. One fan of the show likened 'network retooling' to "brain surgery with a baseball bat", and tv SF fans will grimly recall the revamped *Galactica* and *Buck Rogers* among others. But for the creative staff to bodge their own hit show so badly is almost setting a new precedent (I can only think of *Mork* and *Mindy* as a forerunner).

The direction the third season of the series took — after the show's virtues and triumphs had been so clearly indicated by the audience — was a bungle of monumental proportions, and yet even with the series' demise, nobody on the show is even prepared to admit it was a disastrous move, or even acknowledge the mistake.

"It's interesting to see the reaction of the fans" mused new producer George Martin, "They seemed to love to hate Paracelsus, but they just hate Gabriel!". Funny, that...

Says Martin, probably rightly, "Recasting Catherine would have produced a failure just as quickly, but a less interesting one."

A ratings failure, perhaps — but the fans might have at least kept their good memories of a short-term success.

Jon Abbott



1984

Once again programming for or about children accounted for much of the Fantasy broadcast this year. The best new series on ITV was **Chocky**, adapted by Anthony Read from John Wyndham's novel, and offering an updated but sympathetic version. **Luna** returned for a second series, with Joanna Wyatt taking over the lead rôle, and **Captain Zep** also changed faces, to that of Richard Morant.

The BBC's big hopes for the teenage audience lay with a lavish production of John Christopher's trilogy **The Tripods**. Although it looked good, the performances of the young actors portraying the central characters were very variable, and its first series dragged on for thirteen weeks without very much happening. Other children's series included **Benji**, **Zax and the Alien Prince**, and series 2 of **Terrahawks**, neither of which was worth writing home about. ITV's **Dramarama** strand of short plays featured *Mr Stabs*, a



Richard Morant took over the rôle of Captain Zep Photo © BBC

bizarre **Ace of Wands** spin-off (of all things), starring David Jason.

The range of new shows — supposedly — for adults included such delights as **Automan**, about a computer generated crime-fighter, and **Manimal**, starring Simon MacCorkindale as a man who could turn into animals. **Battlestar Galactica** metamorphosed rather belatedly, as far as UK viewers were concerned, into **Galactica 1980**. Gaining huge ratings meanwhile was the Earth-invasion-by-lizard-people mini-series **V**, screened as ITV's alternative to the Olympics. Other ITV offerings included the first series of **Robin of Sherwood**, with Michael

Præd, and the first set of **Adventures of Sherlock Holmes**, while getting increasingly desperate was **The Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense**. The last gasp of an old trouper came in **The Return of the Man from U.N.C.L.E.** (with a cameo by George Lazenby!), while Channel 4, as well as finishing off **The Prisoner** repeats with a special documentary, transmitted the arcane **They Came From Somewhere Else**, an alternative SF sitcom...

The BBC produced two single genre dramas, **Threads**, a gorily realistic update of **The War Game** shown shortly after the original had finally been broadcast, and **Z for Zachariah**, with Anthony Andrews and Pippa Hinchley as the survivors of a nuclear holocaust. The usual Sunday serial slot was deemed unsuitable for **The Invisible Man**, so it went out on weekday evenings. Unlike previous versions it was faithful to the book, and well-acted, with Pip Donaghy in the lead rôle. A two-year repeat season of **Star Trek** began.

Doctor Who returned in January, and as with the previous two seasons was on weekdays, this time Thursdays and Fridays (except for the middle serial, *Resurrection of the Daleks*, the delayed conclusion of the previous season, which was re-edited into 50-minute episodes and shown on Wednesdays). After only twenty stories (and fewer episodes than several companions) Peter Davison left the show, to be replaced for the final four episodes by Colin Baker, in the world's worst costume. However Davison left on a high note, with Robert Holmes contributing his first script in five years, the excellent *The Caves of Androzani*.

Described as 'the ultimate television hero', Automan had a short television life



1985

Doctor Who returned to Saturdays with Colin Baker established in the lead, but in a new format of 45 minute episodes. The season featured Cybermen, Daleks and the Master, as well as the Doctor's second incarnation in the non-anniversary *The Two Doctors*. But low ratings and protests about increased violence led to the announcement that the show would be rested for a time... One show that was rested permanently was *The Tripods*. Even though our heroes infiltrated the Tripod city in its second series, ratings did not improve and the BBC cut its losses. One new product from the BBC children's department was *Galloping Galaxies*, for very young viewers...

Meanwhile, Troy Kennedy Martin's powerful thriller *Edge of Darkness*, directed by Martin Campbell, won widespread praise and a speedy repeat. It



More adventures with Chocky in *Chocky's Children*

starred Bob Peck and Joe Don Baker, investigating shady goings on in the nuclear industry and intelligence community. Rowan Atkinson returned in *Blackadder II*, now replaced as co-writer by Ben Elton. *The Galactic Garden* was an amusing curiosity, more of a nature programme than a true genre entry, with Andrew Sachs as a miniature spaceman in peril in an English country garden...

ITV presented two further Chocky stories, *Chocky's Children* and *Chocky's Challenge*, now original rather than based on the novel, and continued with *Robin of Sherwood* and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. *Children of the Dog Star*

was a serial from New Zealand, hidden away in children's programming but nonetheless entertaining. Rather less so was *Small Wonder*, a US sitcom about a robotic little girl. *V* returned, this time as a series proper, but lacking a network slot, failed to conquer the ratings this time. It was no surprise that *Otherworld* did likewise — it was a fatuous saga about a family who cross a dimensional portal while visiting the great pyramid...

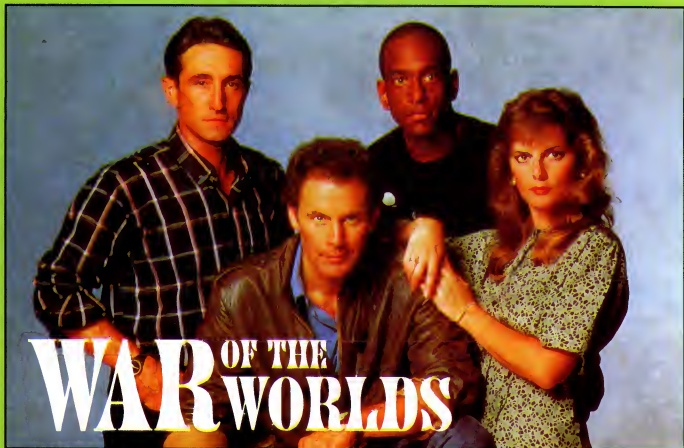
Tucked away were repeats of Gerry Anderson's *Fireball XL5* and episodes of *The Ray Bradbury Theatre*, repackaged as *The Bradbury Trilogy*. There were also two one-off dramas, the *Dramarama* play *The Universe Downstairs* and the failed pilot *Timeslip* — nothing to do with the early '70s series, this was a tacky thriller, 'introduced' by Duran Duran's John Taylor.

Phenomenon of the year was *Max Headroom*. Conceived firstly as a novel way of presenting pop videos, the idea was to have a computer animated video jockey, but technology being what it is, that had to be faked using actor Matt Frewer and a prosthetic forehead. Then they had the idea of explaining where this being came from, and the 'pilot' film was commissioned, presenting a *Blade Runner*-ish vision of the world twenty minutes in the Future, where the ratings war has got very nasty. Ace reporter Edison Carter investigates the people behind blipverts, ultra-fast advertisements which have a tendency to cause seasoned couch potatoes to explode, and in the process is nearly killed. His brain print is fed into a computer whizz-kid's artificial intelligence program, and *Max Headroom* is born...



Only a few seconds into the Future in *Max Headroom*





The main cast of the 1st season of *War of the Worlds*; Richard Chaves, Jared Martin, Philip Akin and Lynda Mason Green

FOLLOWING the success of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and Paramount's other genre offering, *Friday the 13th: The Series*, the studio commissioned a companion series based on one of the best known science fiction novels ever, HG Wells's *The War of the Worlds*.

The series would not, as in the book, follow life in Victorian England in the wake of the Martian invasion, it would instead be a sequel to the 1953 Paramount film version of the story. In that re-telling the war took place in 'contemporary' America. The final outcome was the same as in the book, however, with the Martians being overcome by Earth's bacteria. With the Earth a seeming death trap for the interplanetary invaders, the first problem facing the series creative team was that of finding a way to bring them back to life!

Starting The Series

The problem of how to resurrect the aliens was a problem for father and son team Sam and Greg Strangis (who shared executive producer's credits) creative consultant Herbert Wright (who had just completed one season on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*), executive script consultant Tom Lazarus and Producer Jonathan Hackett. The backstory they came up with to explain the Martians' reappearance



Lt Col. Paul Ironhorse was in charge



A horrific scene from the 2nd season
The 2nd season saw a more violent aspect and new aliens





Dr Suzanne McCullough (Lynda Mason Green) and Dr Harrison Blackwood

ance is credited to Greg Strangis, since he is given sole 'created by' billing.

In this new version, the Martians did not die when invaded by Earth's bacteria, instead they lapsed into a state of deep hibernation. The 'bodies' from the war were collected and stored in military dumping grounds where, by chance, some come into contact with radioactive waste stored there. This kills the bacteria within them and allows the aliens to function again.

A new ability of the aliens was that they were able to merge with human beings and take over their bodies. The possessed human beings then needed to remain in areas of high radioactivity and so the bodies gradually 'decayed' from radiation damage until the inhabiting Martian had to find a new body or die along with the host. While in possession of a human

body, the Martians could extend their third arm out through the stomach of their host in order to attack the person they were talking to!

Martians not Martians!

The Martians were no longer Martians either. They were simply an advanced scout party that had used Mars as a staging post. The aliens had arrived to prepare Earth for the main invasion force, which was said to be a few years away from Earth. Our world, as usual, is totally unprepared for such an invasion, although this seems a little unusual considering thirty-five years earlier it suffered a War of the Worlds. To explain this, Strangis came up with a 'global amnesia' in which the original war was so terrible that most

people unconsciously blocked it from their memories. It was never taught in schools and any mention of a war was vigorously refuted by world governments.

Around these ideas the series took shape. If they, perhaps, seem a little too contrived, it may simply be due to a lack of development time. The series was hit badly by the writers' strike in which creator Greg Strangis, a Writers' Guild Member, stopped work. As well as creating the back story, Greg Strangis was also writing the pilot episode. At the end of the strike he suddenly found himself with a lot of work to do and very little time to do it in. This same strike was also thought to be a contributing factor to why the opening of *Star Trek: The Next Generation's* second season failed to live up to the promise of the first season's ending.

The First Season

If the weakest part of the show was its premise, the strongest was definitely its characters. Dr Harrison Blackwood was an maveric astrophysicist who passionately believed in the threat posed by the aliens. Jared Martin portrayed the scientist with a charm and charisma that bordered on downright eccentricity now and again: such as when he stood upon his head to restore the isostatic balance of his internal organs!

Dr Suzanne McCullough (Lynda Mason Green) was a microbiologist recruited by Blackwood. She did not entirely agree with Harrison's methods or mannerisms, but together with the antagonism between them there was also a hint every now and again of sexual tension. She was the mother of Debbie, her twelve year old daughter who lived with her.

As much as McCullough did not fit into the Blackwood Project, wheelchair bound Norton Drake did. Played by Philip Akin, he was another charismatic figure, passing his time solving outrageously difficult problems with a supercomputer, blending coffee, wearing loud tee-shirts and listening to music — his 'sounds'!

When the scientists began to receive military funding in the pilot episode, they were assigned a military officer for the team. He was to become the series' most popular character, Lt Colonel Paul Ironhorse, in the form of actor Richard Chaves. Part Cherokee, all action and ready to confront the scientists over everything. He was the cool counterpoint to the others' impulsive behaviour.

During the first season these characters found themselves in several excellent stories. One of the best was *A Multitude of Idols* which guest starred Michelle Scabell, who would go on to star in *Alien*

Terminal Rock (Episode 28)

A hard rock band are used by the aliens to program teenagers for violence



Nation. This show proved that the humans would not always win, as the Martians managed to revive hundreds of new warriors. In the depths of a desperate situation, however, the writing also highlighted the humour between the characters. This was probably the series' definitive episode.

The following episode, *Eye For An Eye*, took the team to Grover's Mill, the sight Orson Welles picked for his fictitious radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds* in 1938. Only, was it fictitious? The team find out that it was in fact a government cover-up to hide the fact that an alien incursion did take place! Unfortunately this level of creativity in the writing could not be maintained.

As the first season progressed, what started out as a few horrific scenes in order to heighten the scare-factor escalated into full-blown gore. Especially in the episode *Unto Us A Child Is Born*. It became obvious that the promise and inventiveness of the early episodes was not being lived up to, and many expected cancellation since the viewing figures were on a downward spiral.

Second Season

In 1989 it became obvious to Paramount that the series was in trouble. What started, albeit on rocky ground, as something that had potential had generated into 'comic-book' story-telling. The studio installed Frank Mancuso Jr and the whole creative team was shaken up. They instructed Mancuso to revamp the show and make any and all changes he felt were appropriate. Two of those changes be-



While our heroes celebrate Debi's birthday, the aliens steal military secrets in *Candel in the Night* (Episode 40)

came the deaths of Ironhorse and Drake.

The new premise featured a second wave of aliens arriving and ordering the execution of the first wave that had performed so badly in the first season. These aliens, called Morthren, could clone human beings perfectly. After they captured Ironhorse, his clone returned to the cottage and killed Norton Drake. By the episode's end Ironhorse himself was dead and the team had a new recruit, Paul Kincaid, as played by Adrian Paul.

This new *War of the Worlds* portrayed a very dark world indeed. Very reminiscent of the Future as depicted by various cyberpunk novels and films, it was almost post-apocalyptic and highly dehumanising.

The Obelisk (Episode 43)

Alien scientist Mana is worried by Malzor's move against the humans



Again, some interesting stories occur in this season, such as *Doomsday*, in which the Morthren use images from their own religion and stage fake miracles to give one of their clones almost God-like status among the desperate humans. Also, *Time To Reap* is a romp back in Time to the 1953 invasion, with Morthren leader Malzor trying to immunize the dying aliens against Earth's bacteria.

Finally, however, this new creative team could not breathe better life into the series than the original attempt, and realizing that cancellation was staring them in the face, they elected to end the war once and for all. That they did in the 42nd episode, *The Obelisk*, where they reveal exactly where the aliens come from and why they came to Earth, and we finally learn that there was more double-dealing among the Morthren than among most human politicians. As for who wins...

UK Transmission

War of the Worlds first appeared in the UK courtesy of CIC Video. Five cassettes were released onto the rental market. Several years later, the series began to show up on regional ITV stations in late night slots. Several stations have edited the show for its gore, but unless any TV Zone readers know different, UK transmission has been restricted to the first season.

It is reported that CIC plan to issue the whole series on sell-thru video starting in 1993. So perhaps now, some five years after its initial production, UK Science Fiction fans will have their chance to judge this flawed but interesting and enjoyable series... and discover who wins in the end.

Stuart Clark





1986

1986 was something of a slack year, with genre tv getting thin on the ground. There was another series of **Galloping Galaxies**, of **Robin of Sherwood** (now starring Jason Connery), **The Return of Sherlock Holmes** (returning from Reichenbach Falls), and the third and final series of **Terrahawks**. In an episode of the resurrected **Alfred Hitchcock Presents**, *Human Interest Story*, a newspaper reporter investigates an alien warning of an invasion of Earth, but turns out to be one of the invaders... Channel 4 continued its re-runs of classic SF shows with the beginning of what was to be, at last, a complete showing of **The Twilight Zone**.

By far the best children's drama was **The Box of Delights**, one of those engaging fantasies that relies heavily on video effects when adapted for television. Fortunately in this case reliable old troupers like Patrick Troughton and Robert Stephens made up for a lot. **Dramarama** productions included *The Come-Uppance of Captain Katt*, Peter Grimwade's behind-the-scenes satire about a Science Fiction show, and *Flashback*, about a boy going back in Time to the 1940s.

Doctor Who's protracted absence finally ended in the autumn when the show returned with another format re-jig. Transmission was still on Saturdays, and was once more in 25 minute episodes, but the fourteen week season was presented as a single story, *The Trial of a Time Lord*, albeit rather obviously made up of three four-part adventures and a two-part conclusion. The stories ranged from another Robert Holmes pot-boiler drawing on lots of old ideas, through a disjointed Philip Martin tale which used the idea that the stories, presented as evidence in the Doctor's trial, were being interfered with, to a Pip and Jane Baker attempt at a traditional monster story-cum-whodunnit, which was almost effective given the added burden of Bonnie Langford as the Doctor's



Bonnie Langford joined the Doctor in his travels Photo © S Payne

new companion. The final two episodes, one written by Robert Holmes shortly before his death, and the other cobbled together by the Bakers when script editor Eric Saward quit the show taking his version with him, started as a surreal delight but sadly degenerated into a confused cop-out, with an inconclusive and illogical ending...

One of the best shows of the year was hardly cult viewing, such was its acclaim and popularity: **The Life and Loves of a She-Devil**, adapted from her own novel by Fay Weldon, was a kind of modern fairy tale with some very nasty detail, and

a lot of mythic sequences using state-of-the-art video effects. The stars were Dennis Waterman, Patricia Hodge and newcomer Julie T Wallace, while Tom Baker's bottom made a cameo appearance. On the other hand, **Dead Head**, a film noir-ish surreal thriller with a political angle by Howard Brenton was a more controversial production, although those who disliked it outweighed its supporters. Lashings of sex and violence, cynicism and political nihilism, and its gradual descent into non-naturalism, had the effect of alienating most of its audience by the end of its four episodes...

Problems behind the scenes in *The Come-Uppance of Captain Katt*



1987

This year saw the advent of Chris Boucher's **Star Cops**, a flawed gem of a series starring David Calder as reluctant Space policeman Nathan Spring, faced with a variety of extra-terrestrial crime, with the usual complement of misfits as subordinates. **Star Cops'** major fault was that the crimes and the detecting thereof wasn't much to write home about, but the major characters were endearing, with enough edge to avoid becoming sentimental — it deserved a second series. The same can't really be said about TVS's **The Knights of God**, which although made on film managed to look rather cheaper than the taped BBC show. A cast including Gareth Thomas and Patrick Troughton couldn't help this tale of the quest to find the king of a post-holocaust England avoid viewers' apathy... Meanwhile on the cult comedy front, **Blackadder the Third** took the saga into the Regency period, without losing the hints of self-referential surrealism.

Children's Fantasy programmes included Central's imaginative **The Secret World of Polly Flint**, about a girl who tries to help the inhabitants of a village that vanished into Time; the BBC meanwhile launched **Aliens in the Family**, a Fantasy with added teenage angst. Somewhat less gripping was the new American 'family' sitcom **A.L.F.**, featuring a kind of cuddly toy alien with added sarcasm, but although there was the occasional funny line, for the most part it was the usual mush.

As ever, there was **Doctor Who**, but after the poor ratings for the previous season, the show lost both its Saturday slot and its star. Colin Baker, having been effectively sacked by the powers that be, declined to appear in a hand-over scene to his replacement Sylvester McCoy. Thus the regeneration scene in part one of *Time and the Rani* involved disguising McCoy effects. Although the production team

tried to restore the mystery of the character, they were hampered by McCoy's limited range as an actor, as well as his continuing companion Bonnie Langford — an Equity card does not an actor make. Through the course of another 14 episode season, the two met up with such fearsome foes as a race of killer bats, a psychotic towerblock, and a warlike race hunting down the last survivor of their enemies on 1950s Earth — the last being one of the oddest stories on record, scarcely recognizable as **Doctor Who**, with the implausible title *Delta and the Bannermen*. The final story of the season, *Dragonfire*, reintroduced the affable rogue Glitz (from the previous series), and introduced Bonnie Langford's replacement, Sophie Aldred's tomboyish Ace.

As well as the epically bland fictionalised account of America's Space programme in the innovatively titled **Space**, based on James Michener's doorstep-novel, there was the resurrected **Twilight Zone**, a completely new series this time



Aliens were in the family... Photo: BBC

rather than re-runs, but lacking the innovation, imagination and sheer punch of the original, despite frequent well-known guest stars. Good grief, it was even in colour!

The Knights of God made little impression on viewers





The DC Fontana-written scene featuring an ancient Dr McCoy meeting Data

ON Friday October 10th 1986 Paramount Pictures called America's press to a conference in which the studio's president of television, Mel Harris, announced that a brand new series of Star Trek would be in front of viewing audi-

ences within the space of one year.

The announcement came when the general public were waiting in eager anticipation of Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home. Although stealing some of the new movie's thunder, it thankfully did not stop it becoming the most successful Star

Trek film. It did, however, start an extended uproar from some Trekkers that raged throughout the 'new' series' gestation period and most of the way through the first season.

Central to the controversy was the decision that the series would feature all new actors and have very little to do with Star Trek as it was then perceived. In fact, the only obvious link to the original series would be the basic premise and the fact that Gene Roddenberry would be in the driving seat once more.

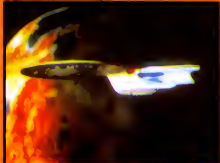
Originally, Marina Sirtis and Denise Crosby auditioned for each other's rôles



Tempting Roddenberry

Paramount were shrewd enough to realize that the success of Star Trek was in

The new Enterprise for the series



no small part due to its creator Gene Roddenberry. When they approached him and asked if he would create another series, he originally said no because he still remembered the battles he had fought with network censors during the original series. Everyone, it seemed, had more authority than the writers over what could be shown. Fate conspired to help lure Roddenberry back, however, as when Paramount began talking to networks about running a new *Star Trek* television series they met with only limited interest.

When thinking of the huge popularity of the *Star Trek* series in syndication (running on local cable stations) Paramount decided to sell this new show directly to those stations, and at a stroke the regulations and censorship that were part and parcel of network programming were side-stepped entirely. Suddenly Roddenberry was interested and Paramount tempted him back into the creator/executive producer's chair.

Roddenberry built a team of people, including many original series veterans, around him to help in the creation of this new show. They included Robert Justman and Eddie Milkis who were original series producers. DC Fontana had been story editor and David Gerrold had contributed *The Trouble with Tribbles* script. Also aboard were William Theiss, who designed the original costumes, and Andrew Probert, Rick Sternbach and Michael Okuda who had all worked on the *Star Trek* motion pictures. New to *Star Trek* were producer Rick Berman, producer Herb Wright — who would later leave and create *War Of The Worlds* — Robert Lewin and Maurice Hurley.

Central to the early controversy was that some of the above suggested they were trying to fix everything that was 'wrong' with the original show. In fact what they probably meant was that they were simply trying to distance it to allow the breathing space it needed to fly (or fail) on its own merits. The original show, after all, was by now one of the most successful entertainment phenomena in the world — not exactly indicative of having a lot wrong with it. The erroneous view that the studio were 'sacking' the originals in favour of new people also caused tension with long-time fans, but when *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* was announced, that particular concern receded.

Designing The Future

Gene Roddenberry was determined to make the universe of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* very different from the one audiences had grown used to. To that end it was decided that there would be no



An early publicity shot featuring Data, Wil Riker and Geordi La Forge

stories involving Klingons, Romulans or Vulcans. In fact to underline the point it was eventually decided that the Klingon Empire and the Federation were at peace with one another.

The time frame of the new series was still in flux with some ideas placing it in the twenty-fifth century making Enterprise NCC-1701-G the eighth vessel to carry that name. It was finally decided to make it a Twenty-fourth Century show with 70-80 years between its time and that of Kirk and Spock. The familiar stations of navigator, helmsman, communication's officer would all be changed in favour of ops, conn and tactical. The so-called 'battleship sterility' of the original Enterprise was to be replaced by something known as 'technology unchained' which the producers coined to mean that functionality was no longer the primary aim of technology. Now, as well as technology's practical purposes, it should also look well-designed and elegant. All of the new designs came from Probert and Sternbach. Mike Okuda set about designing the

new graphics panels. Some of the sets were cannibalised from the motion picture Enterprise, others were built from scratch.

The Characters

Almost everyone reading this will now be familiar with the characters of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, but back in the early days they went through some interesting changes as they grew and evolved.

Captain *Julien Picard* was always intended to be a Frenchman, but one who spoke with a 'mid-Atlantic' accent! It was Robert Justman who saw Patrick Stewart in a reading at UCLA and knew immediately that he wanted him for Captain. As time went on the name changed to the now familiar Jean-Luc and Roddenberry still held out for a Frenchman. Finally (obviously) the rôle did go to Stewart.

The first officer was almost always referred to as Number One and was William *Ryder*. He inherited many of the traits

that Roddenberry had outlined for Commander Decker in the aborted *Star Trek II* television series. In a very early document it was stated that Ryker was born in Alaska.

Data was always a special character, because he was a second chance at bringing life to the character of Quesitor from Roddenberry's unsold pilot *The Quesitor Tapes*. In fact, the android character changed very little from initial concept to that which appeared. Most of his development has occurred on screen.

Macha Hernandez was Roddenberry's tribute to the then recently released film *Aliens*. He had been impressed with the character of Vasques and resolved to have someone similar to her on this new show. Initially Marina Sirtis auditioned for this rôle and Denise Crosby auditioned for Troi. When the two swapped rôles, the producers realized that Crosby did not fit the description of Hernandez, but was too good not to have in the rôle. They solved the problem by changing the character's name and 'back story'. She first became Tanya and then Natasha 'Tasha' Yar of Ukrainian decent.

Deanna Troi changed very little in her development phase. She was always slated to be an alien, although the fine details of her parentage and empathic abilities had yet to be worked out.

Beverly Crusher was said to have the walk of a 'striptease queen'! She was accompanied onboard by her 15 year old daughter, *Leslie* Crusher. The gender of Crusher Junior was in quite a state of flux throughout the development period. Although Roddenberry wanted a male teenager, some of the other staff members were quite vocal in their support of a female adolescent. Eventually the part was cast male and given Roddenberry's

Rick Berman was new to *Star Trek* in 1987 and continues to be a steering force for the series' success Photo © S Payne



Beverly Crusher was originally to have a 15 year old daughter, Leslie Crusher

middle name of Wesley. The character is thought by some to have been the personification of the teenager Roddenberry always aspired to be, and the unmerciful hatred of him by fans in the first year hurt *Star Trek*'s creator quite badly.

Finally, the character of Geordi La Forge was named in honour of *Star Trek* fan George La Forge, who was a disabled fan that had made many friends at conventions, including Gene Roddenberry. The problem of what Geordi should do was finally solved in season two when he became Chief Engineer.

Worf was never meant to be anything more than a semi-regular 'background' person, only included at the very last moment because of Roddenberry's steadfast refusal to have any familiar alien species onboard. Michael Dorn's excellent portrayal of the character, however, soon elevated him to a level of equal popularity.

First Encounter

DC Fontana was charged with the job of

writing the pilot episode of the new series. Not a simple task in itself, but behind-the-scenes events were also conspiring to make the job harder as well. No-one could decide how long the pilot should be. It kept changing from an hour long show to a two hour show and back again. At one stage it even became a ninety minute piece of television (all timings include adverts).

Fontana got over this problem by simply writing the teleplay and then promising to cut or pad as need be. In fact she did not have to, because when the final length of the pilot was decided, Roddenberry did the rewriting chores. Fontana's script dealt exclusively with the mystery of Farpoint Station and Roddenberry added the all-new Q plot line. Also included late in the day was the Fontana-written McCoy scene.

Star Trek: The Next Generation premiered on October 3rd 1987 and after a rocky start really took off. Right now the series going through the birth pangs is *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*!

Stuart Clark



Opposite page: Nicolò is filmed at the recording of the Doctor in Disguise record which was made with the help of music and Doctor Who also to give the experience

FOR three years during the mid-1980s Nicola Bryant played the rôle of Perpugilliam Brown during one of *Doctor Who*'s most controversial periods. Joining towards the end of the fifth Doctor Peter Davison's reign, Peri débuted in a bikini, then went on to meet Daleks, Cybermen, Sil and two more incarnations of the Doctor (Colin Baker and Patrick Troughton) before finally being blasted to death by a raging alien king (Brian Blessed) during *Trial of a Time Lord* season.

Nicola Bryant had originally set out to be a dancer, a career which had not met with the approval of her parents, but when they discovered her love of acting, while she was attending boarding school, they decided that her dancing would be best left for any musicals she may one day appear in. She went on to train at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art and the Royal College of Music, where she was spotted by theatrical agent Terry Carney who, at that time, was also the agent of *Doctor Who*'s Mark Strickson (Turlough). It was Carney who put her forward for the rôle of Peri: "I thought it was great when I heard I had got the part. I'd watched *Who* every Saturday and Jon Pertwee was the first Doctor I saw."

All-American

Despite being English Nicola found no problem in mastering Peri's American accent.

"I spent a lot of time with American people, which is where I picked up the accent. Peter Davison was told to say that John Nathan-Turner (the show's producer) was casting an American actress and to keep it a secret that I was English. I had no idea when I joined that Peter would be leaving. I had this whole back-

Nicola with Colin Baker on location on the Brighton coast for *The Trial of a Time Lord* season



NICOLA BRYANT



Nicola Bryant and Colin Baker outside BBC Broadcasting House to publicise the *Doctor Who* radio play *Slipback* Photo © S Page

ground worked out for my character, which only worked with his Doctor. I was even briefed that Peter's Doctor would become a sort of father figure for Peri. Initially I had based Peri's character on a certain friend of mine, who I was at school with, though parts of myself are like her also.

"I've never met a Perpugilliam, John [Nathan-Turner] found the name in a book and it was supposed to be a very trendy name in the '60s.

"When I first saw the script I thought that Peri could have been an accurate reflection of young students in the late '80s. But I soon realized that this wasn't going to be the case when, on location, one of the make up artists asked what nail polish I wanted and I replied that I didn't think Peri would wear nail polish, only to have them insist that Peri would."

Lanzarote

Soon after being cast Nicola was whisked away to Lanzarote for filming in

her first story *Planet of Fire*.

"On my first day we filmed the scenes of my being rescued by Mark (Strickson), we arrived at the beach by 6am and it was totally empty. By the time we had set up the place was full of stark naked Germans sunbathing. Every time I jumped into the water to drown six naked men would attempt to save me!

"They had to make a reinforced bikini for me because we were filming with the *Daily Star* photographers on location and it had to be completely safe. During the drowning scene I went down three times and then came out of my bikini top, so I had to push Mark away, who was trying to rescue me, and go under once more to push myself back in. Peter and Mark were both very supportive and helped a lot. Mark had to carry me out of the water and dropped me a number of times, which is also exactly what Peter did during recording the final scenes of *Caves of Androzani*.

"During the recording of *Caves...* I had to wear the same skimpy costume, from

Planet of Fire, for location recording in Poole, and it was sub zero temperatures. I remember at one point a rather annoyed cameraman saying, 'Will you slap that girl, she's gone a bit blue'. Peter and I both ended up quite ill afterwards — though Peter wore thermal underwear under his costume. I actually got frostbite and pneumonia."

Brash Doctor

Caves of Androzani saw the departure of Peter Davison and the arrival of Colin Baker as the brash and aggressive Sixth Doctor.

"When Colin joined I had to re-think my character quite a bit. I didn't really like the way the writer's set up our relationship, especially during my second year, as all Peri and the Doctor had to do was bicker in every story. As Peri's original reason for joining the Doctor had been to get away from her awful mother and stepfather, it just seemed silly that she would have stayed with the Doctor. It was very much Colin and myself who influenced our character changes during my third year, obviously you're not allowed to change too much, but we tried to prevent the rowing as much as possible."

Monsters and Cleavage

Her first full season with the Sixth Doctor saw her pitted against some of the show's most memorable villains, including the Master, Cybermen and Daleks.

"My favourite monster/character was Sil in *Vengeance on Varos* and, of course, I remembered the Daleks from when I had been very young. It was really strange to work with them, I really couldn't believe it at first."

Nicola became very popular with the public and press during her time on the show, but not always for the same reasons. The tabloid press began to feature photos of Nicola in her skimpy costumes, while accusing the show of being 'too sexy' for children.

"Displaying cleavage was not an in-character thing for Peri to do, but it was a very in-JNT character thing to do."

"I didn't mind wearing the obligatory shorts and top in *The Two Doctors*, as they were the correct clothes for the weather, but that reflective top made me feel like a chicken wrapped up in baco foil. I enjoyed the filming for that story. Patrick Troughton and myself were always having pranks played on us by Colin and Frazer Hines, who used to gang up on us both."

"During *Revelation of the Daleks* we had a scene where Alexi Sayle and myself



Nicola Bryant with Peter Davison at a *Doctor Who* convention

Photo © Marion Beece

were being shot at by Daleks, and it suddenly struck me how ridiculous it all was and how much like being in a playground it seemed. I suddenly burst out laughing and couldn't believe I was doing this for a living."

Cancellation

"I was very disappointed by the season being cancelled, I knew that Eric Seward was writing a story for me in Season 23, which would have had Peri meeting with her dark side. That was my story and we were also hoping to film an Auton story in New Orleans or Singapore."

Nicola finally departed the series during the 'Mindwarp' segment of Colin Baker's final season.

"I had an excellent make-up artist who did a brilliant skull cap which is great for about two hours and then it starts to rise. Unfortunately, my final and most dramatic scene came during the end of a day's recording and they told me not to raise my eyebrows or grin whilst doing the scene."

"I was fairly happy with the way I was written out, John had asked me how I would like to leave and I replied, 'With a bang'. I didn't want to be married off. After I had been killed off, there was so much protest about it that they chickened out and revealed that I'd married Yacamors after all — what a fate!"

Press and Sex

It was only after her time in the show had ended that Nicola was able to turn the tables on the ever attentive tabloid press.

"I enjoyed doing the publicity shot after I had left the most. There was a whole

group of BBC personalities, but I enjoyed it because no one could tell me what to wear as I had already left the series. So I attended the shoot in a trouser suit and the press were livid and asking if I would be changing, I had great delight in saying 'No'."

"I don't think *Doctor Who* ever set out to be a sexist programme during the Sixties. According to television, all women were stupid and helpless and only discovered they could change during the 1990s! If you look at some of the shows that were made during the 1970s, *Starsky and Hutch* for example, some of the things they did would just be totally unacceptable nowadays."

After Who

After her departure from the show Nicola returned to theatre work and memorable performances in *Killing Jessica* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, along with commercials and the odd television appearance, such as *Blackadder*.

"It was great fun doing the *Blackadder Christmas Special*. Rowan Atkinson is very quiet, and working with Ben Elton was very interesting. I was instructed by the director to go to the loo for two minutes and come back with the most obnoxious laugh I could find — akin to a machine gun!"

Nicola still has very fond memories of *Doctor Who* and has still not left it totally behind her. Apart from her many convention appearances she had no hesitation in returning to work with Colin Baker for three BBC Film Club Videos as 'Miss Brown', alongside Colin's character 'The Stranger'.

Graeme Wood

1988

Doctor Who celebrated another anniversary, its twenty-fifth, including among the four stories in the season a Dalek and a Cyberman tale, the latter being the declared anniversary story (its first episode being transmitted on the show's birthday, the 23rd November). For some reason it was made entirely on location, which resulted in some less than atmospheric settings, and a lot of painfully under-rehearsed scenes. The Dalek story was far better, with a cutesy 1963 setting not diminishing some innovative emotional content and period flavour from first-time writer Ben Aaronovitch. The other two stories were moderately appealing, a political satire, *The Happiness Patrol*, and a satire on fandom, *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy*, of which some scenes were recorded in the car park at BBC Elstree due to the discovery of asbestos in studios at the BBC's television centre. What with this and a late start in transmission due to the Olympics, the anniversary wasn't quite the glowing success it might have been.

It was a rather better year for SF com-



The Daleks returned for their last outing to date... Photo © S Payne

edy, which for the first time included **Blackadder**, which had a spoof Space Opera segment in its Christmas Carol special edition. New comedy came in the form of **Red Dwarf**, which had been originally scheduled to begin showing in late '87, but production difficulties delayed its debut until early this year. The second series went into production almost immediately, despite the relatively lukewarm response to the first, but someone somewhere obviously realized they were on to a winner. The first series is often overlooked now, but contained some excellent character episodes, while the sec-

ond series can be said to form the basis of the eventual form of the show — including most of the plots that recur throughout the subsequent series...

Unintentional comedy came in various guises: Channel 4's repeats of **Lost in Space** being one of the more predictably risible. For the BBC's **First Born** it was rather more of a surprise. Based on the novel *Gorsaga* by Maureen Duffy, the three part serial was produced by the team responsible for **The Life and Loves of a She-Devil**. While the basic idea of the genetic engineering of a human/gorilla hybrid was sound, the execution was somewhat melodramatic, especially given the dour and humourless central performance of mad scientist Charles Dance.

Once again much of the Fantasy television was for children, including a couple of one-offs. There was another **Dramarama**, *Now You See Them*, with Don Henderson as a mysterious magician, and *Quest Beyond Time*, part of a series called **Winners** on Channel 4, an Australian/British co-production on environmental issues. **Erasmus Microman**, starring the effusive Ken Campbell, was also informative, but with a greater adventure content. Finally there was **The Gemini Factor**, in the tradition of spooky children's series such as **The Changelings**. This was an original series by Paula Milne, about a girl and boy who turn out to be twins, with a psychic link. Enthralling stuff, even for grown-ups...

Red Dwarf started its voyages



1989

If other years during the 80s had been short on SF and Fantasy shows, 1989 was the shortest... **Erasmus Microman** returned for a second season, with our hero in pursuit of the villainous Dr Dark. **Red Dwarf**'s third series featured Kryten, a one-off character in the second season, as a regular, and ship's computer Holly having a sex change from Norman Lovett to fellow stand-up Hattie Hayridge. Meanwhile, **Blackadder Goes Forth** completed that series' run, with a First World War setting making for a somewhat more sober and earthy flavour...

Max Headroom returned to British screens in the form of a 14-part American series, with the plot of the British pilot film picked apart, sanitised and expanded upon, and then some. The series was an



In 1989 there was murder on the Moon Photo © LWT

interesting departure from the usual optimistic tone of American programmes, and it was good too to see original stars Matt Frewer and Amanda Pays kept on, as well as W Morgan Sheppard as tv hacker Blank Reg. Sadly the piratical finale of the original film was dropped in favour of Edison Carter continuing with the network.

Rather less inspiring material from America came in the form of **Superboy**, from the people who brought you the four cinema **Superman** films. The series was based on the established myth of the

comic books, but updated to the '80s, introducing a lot of socially-conscious themes. However, the plots were stretched thinly, the characters bland and uninspiring.

The blockbuster **Murder on the Moon** starred Brigitte Nielsen and Julian Sands as a couple of investigators on the trail of a transsexual killer in the year 2015. A glossy production, filmed in Britain by an American company but commissioned by LWT, it made something of a publicity splash at the time but didn't exactly linger in the memory...

And lastly, in more than one sense, there was **Doctor Who**. It seemed routine that another season was produced, and that there were the now customary stories heavily based on continuity. The season opener *Battlefield* featured the return of Brigadier Lethbridge Stewart, who, despite rumours to the contrary, was *not* killed off in this Arthurian tale — all this and heavy hints that the Doctor might have been/would be Merlin... or not? The second story, *Ghost Light*, the last **Doctor Who** to be recorded, was an atmospheric studio-bound tale set in a house in 1880s Perivale. Like the two subsequent stories it featured a semi-explained back story about Ace's past. In *The Curse of Fenric* she met her own mother as a baby, while the Doctor confronted an ancient enemy who turns out to have snatched Ace from Earth, before she met the Doctor... Then in *Survival*, the last new story to be screened, she returned to the Earth she left, met some old friends, and she and the Doctor encountered the Master and took a trip to a dying planet inhabited by cat people, before wandering off over Perivale Common into tv history...

The end of **Doctor Who**? Photo © S Payne



Robin of Sherwood: In production...

One of the more imaginative series of the Eighties was *Robin of Sherwood*. In this Special we take a look at the making of the series, on location and in production...



Getting the right camera angle for a fight sequence

PHOTO © HTV

On Location

Imagine a picture of green and grey. Of Clannad's haunting theme tune over a soft, pale pool at dawn, with gently swaying branches reflected in its glassy surface. Then imagine a faint growl, growing and growing until a bright red six-wheeled jeep bearing a 22-foot camera crane on its back bursts through the undergrowth followed closely by a two-ton truck — and another... Finally, a pantechnicon far too large for the gap, it's nicotine-stained, beer-bellied driver renting the clear air blue. *Robin of Sherwood* has come to town.

Robin Hood himself would arrive with a screech of tyres and a cloud of smoke in

his brand new bright red Porsche 911, by which time Sherwood Forest would have practically disappeared under a welter of discarded napkins and paper cups.

Things are never as they seem. It never ceased to amaze me that the episodes could feel so hazy, so mysterious, and so other-worldly, considering the farting and swearing that always punctuated every swordfight and arrow-hit from day one. 'Fog 2' was the culprit. Fog 2 is a gentle diffusion filter, favoured by ageing actresses the world over, as it lends a slight edge of softness to the image to make everything look just that little bit distant. It also makes knives and swords glow (provided the prop men have cleaned them), lending even more awe to Nasir's tendency to use both hands.

And it did wonders for Jason Connery's hair.

Alternative Robin

Rehearsals were probably the best things about *Robin of Sherwood*, second only to the bacon and sausage butties at the first light of dawn. Rehearsals are a private treat, sadly denied to Joe Public, of course, because by their very nature the cameras are never running.

Flush with the sort of confidence only available to consummate professionals, for some, rehearsals were often regarded as purely technical — camera line-ups, blocking-out and so on. The dialogue itself would be delivered, and with word-perfect accuracy (most of the time), later



Clean swords will glow under Fog 2 diffusion filter...

while expensive film was being committed. For the rest of the time, we would watch, sides aching, as our own alternative **Robin of Sherwood** show would be enacted before us.

Once, I stood, tears streaming down my face, as Anthony Valentine's freshly arisen from the dead Baron De Belleme was confronted by Nickolas Grace's terror-stricken Sheriff of Nottingham.

"I am the power," bellowed Belleme, sounding very much the proud owner of forces dark and plentiful. The Sheriff quaked, paused, and contrary to the script decided to assert himself.

He stood up straight. "No you're not," he said flatly.

"I *am* the power," reiterated Belleme with the conviction of a roaring lion.

But unlike the cowardly Sheriff we were all familiar with, this one wasn't having any of it. He stood unmoved. "No you're not," he asserted.



Right: Keeping hair tidy between shots



A sense of fun pervaded the filming

During filming of *The Swords of Wayland* a horseman made an unexpected entrance through the roof of a cottage



"Am!" sniffed Belleme, his confidence wavering visibly.

"Not!" claimed the Sheriff.

"Am!" squeaked Belleme.

"Not!" snapped the Sheriff, at which point the all-powerful Belleme grudgingly sat down in the corner of the crypt with a curt "OK" and the suggestion that the Sheriff get the beers in while they awaited Robin Hood's inevitable good-always-wins-out-in-the-end arrival.

The Train Spotter

Another curiosity was the British Rail timetable. Never has one exerted so much influence over so many people — or rats, for that matter.

All films run to a timetable, but a dungeon set for *Robin of Sherwood* series two had been built, in infinite wisdom, in an industrial unit right beside the main Cardiff-Paddington high speed railway line. The sound recordist was forced to keep a timetable adjacent to his mixer, and would have to be consulted as to whether a particular take could be fitted in between the thunder of post-medieval passing trains. Normally the one of the most passed-over technicians on a film set, the recordists always quietly enjoyed the unusual distinction of being practically the most powerful person on the set.

However, amusing though it appears, the dungeon was a trying and wearing



Keeping the camera protected, while surrounded by moody mist...

stage to work on, and the moment 'wrap' was called, with a crash and a bang the entire population would hastily retire to the studio, and in particular the bar, where the Merry Men would begin setting about building on reputations already in need of temperance.

Reckless Driving

Knitted together in the adversity of filming a show better known within its inner sanctums as 'all mud and arrows', the male bonding carefully woven into their characters by Richard Carpenter had leaked off the screen and into reality. And if you consider that the 'Merries' played out characters well known for quasi-terrorist tactics, this had pretty serious implications. They were, for example, the first in living memory to get themselves banned from the bar, which was a shame, as the spectacular show they usually put on was an ideal antidote to the stresses and strains of a long hard day in Sherwood Forest.

After one such long, hot summer's day filming *The Enchantment*, the 'Merries' made a short but nonetheless enthusiastic venture into motor sport. Having availed themselves of a number of expensive high-powered radio-controlled cars, they displayed an impressive ineptness at basic driving skills around the studio's car park.

The sun was setting in a warm orange glow as weary homeward-bound newscasters made their way tripping and stumbling across the car park as tiny cars whizzed out from underneath Range Rovers and XR3s in hot pursuit of each other, while Will Scarlet looked on with rising impatience. Friar Tuck's otherwise mild manner completely evaporated as he expertly manipulated the controls of his transmitter with no real idea of which car he was controlling.

Meanwhile, a growing number of outlaws sitting at nearby tables swigging drinks began to regard the proceedings as far too tame. Soon, any car that ventured too close was subject to an aerial bombardment of beer cans, daggers and ultimately big glass ashtrays. Eventually, even this process was deemed too inaccurate and time consuming, and it was Will Scarlet, terrorist extraordinaire, who developed a far more effective and efficient method to bring about close of play — jump on the car, punch the controller, and throw the transmitter into the hedge.

It'll Be All Right...

Then there are the bits that go wrong. Some of these have been revealed thanks to Dennis Norden's *It'll Be All Right on the Night* 'bloopers' programme, but again the really funny ones tend to slip by

unrecorded.

While filming *The Swords of Wayland* it was necessary to establish the horsemen bad guys invading the village of Ravenscar employing their somewhat annoying habit of flying off the cliffs, their red capes flowing magnificently as they crashed through the roofs of the thatched cottages, before setting about rape and pillage. One sunny April morning in a gully off the main gorge in Cheddar, Somerset, a particular homestead was specially prepared with a 'breakaway' roof as two cameras were placed inside to film a horseman in a red flowing cape (or as in this case, a mannequin called Erik dressed in a flowing red cape) making his grand entrance into the household.

The First Assistant Director issued instructions for the cueing arrangement he had devised. Beaming with pride, he'd developed a simple yet fool-proof system of "One-Two-Three-Throw!", and climbed the adjacent scaffold tower to divulge this information to the rigger entrusted with the enviable task of hurling Erik through the roof. Satisfied, he climbed back down the tower and came into the cottage to share his plan with the eager camera crew.

"I'm gonna call, 'Run cameras', you'll confirm, and then I'm gonna call, 'One-Two-Three-Throw!'"

It was of course at this point that the roof

crashed in around us as Erik made his premature, though nonetheless spectacular, entrance in an explosion of dust, wood, straw and Fuller's earth.

It was time for lunch.

Sadly the leafy copses and woods of Somerset no longer ring to the clash of swordplay, the thunder of hooves, or the rustle of timesheets, and when Robin Hood ('Prince of Thieves') became an American, it was Berkshire that was buried beneath paper cups, not Nempbnet Thurbwell. Maid Marian got herself a day job praising the virtues of soap powder, and one of the producers went off to burn London — but some way, somehow, I'll bet Will Scarlet still jumps on cars.

Tony Shearn

Tony Shearn was hired periodically as focus-puller on the series.

Now to the other side of production with Patrick Dromgoole, the series' Executive Producer...

Robin of Sherwood

Anyone approaching the Robin Hood legend must have been conscious of the traditional image of Robin Hood created by the media, from Hollywood's Errol Flynn, to tv's Richard Green. "Get off — not Richard Green! Not in that terrible hat!... Yes Errol Flynn was the definitive one, he really was marvellous... Yes you think about it, but I mean we had something very firm and clear and definite to say, largely about correlating the legend

itself with the guy playing the character, and we had our own version of it. We wanted to go ahead with it."

But **Robin of Sherwood** was criticised for its 'frightening' sequences and its treatment of witchcraft. Patrick Dromgoole remembers the reaction to *The Seven Swords of Wayland* [see Issue 11] where Rula Lenska played a witch whose coven existed under the veil of a religious order. "I hadn't seen it coming, to be honest with you, quite as strongly as it came. I thought it was, you know, inappropriate and I feel it was much more a religious condemnation than a moral one, because Robin was enormously moral to put it mildly... And there was also one kerfuffle because some journalist—a cursed breed, I hope you never have anything to do with them! — printed a story that we had used the settings of Wells Cathedral to show a witches' sabbath. Now, that looked good in print, [but] it was not at all true, because I mean there was no witches' ceremony there, and the people involved weren't witches and we didn't do it in Wells Cathedral!"

"Drama, as you know, comes out of conflict, nothing else at all. Well you don't get any conflict from people sitting around saying 'let's be nice to Grandma'... whereas Oliver Cotton dragging poor Maid Marian into loving him, you know, making her go through some dreadful murderous ritual of marriage facing warriors fighting to the death, that's evil all right."

Michael Praed was very successful as the legendary hero chosen by Herne, God

of the forest, to be the people's champion. But after two series, Michael Praed announced he was going to go to America and leave **Robin of Sherwood**. "Coffee was drunk quite late one night in the Producer's room! But Paul Knight, the Producer, was convinced that Jason [Connery] could hold it, pull it together for us. And we certainly had the possibility in our story — killing Robin and someone else assuming the mantle, simply because he was a semi-mystic, half-priest, half-warrior figure. And I think it worked out. Jason made a change."

But some people thought the third series lost its edge. "I don't think I would agree with it and if I did, it wouldn't be because of the change in actor, I think it would be attributable to all sorts of things. You know, getting used to the story, no longer being quite as impressed with it as you were, maybe a bit of tiredness of the story lines, maybe one or two weaker episodes or something."

Yet, audience ratings seemed enough to ensure a fourth series of **Robin of Sherwood**, but this was not to be. Goldcrest, who made the series jointly with HTV encountered hard times and it was difficult for HTV to continue making it while distribution of the first three series relied on a company whose personnel were changing almost weekly.

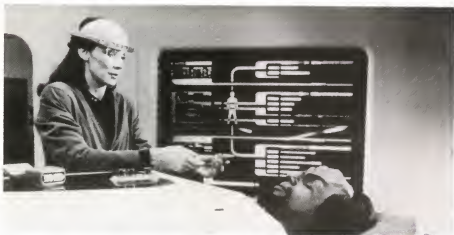
"I would have preferred to go to at least one more series, and I think arguably far more. But for the demise or near-demise of Goldcrest, it would have continued further."

Jane Killick

The original line-up for the series



Cliff Bole's NEXT DIRECTION



Above: *The Lonely Among Us* "I was happy with it," says Bole
Below: *Hide and Q* The return of "brilliant" John DeLance



WHENEVER you watch an episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, there's a strong chance that Cliff Bole's name will be listed as director. Bole is the show's most prolific helmer, with no less than eighteen episodes to his credit.

As far back as Bole can remember, he was destined for a career in showbusiness. "Dad ran a vaudeville theatre in San Francisco, and my brother was Zanuck's resident council, so it's in our blood."

Bole began his career at Universal, starting in the mailroom, and working his way up the showbusiness ladder. His first directorial efforts included *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *V*, *Kojak*, *Barette*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Vegas*, the new *Mission: Impossible* and *Spenser for Hire*. His first episode of *ST:TNG* was *Lonely Among Us*, in which an alien energy being possesses various members of the Enterprise crew.

Bole's opinion of his debut story? "I was happy with it, and evidently they were too, because I kept working. It was a good show, but don't forget, everybody at that time was still fighting and working and struggling for their characters and everything else. That included the cameramen, the directors and the producers. Everybody was trying to find a format."

Snakes and Dogs

A subplot of *Lonely Among Us* concerned two species of alien delegates, which several members of the production team nicknamed 'The Snakes and the Dogs'. In order to make the alien masks more life-like, Bole used lower lighting for those scenes, rather than the ship's normal flat lighting.

"I haven't had too many articulating masks," the director explains, "because they're too difficult and too expensive. Low lighting and modelling help to hide that."

As for the creatures themselves, Bole feels they could have been better. "I don't think the 'Snakes' were too successful. I doubt anybody behind the camera in the



Conspiracy Evil Admiral, packed full of controversial gunge...

production area liked them, although I've had letters, and at some of the conventions people have liked them. Again, articulation would have helped, but that was a money problem.

"The 'Dogs' I thought were too much on the puppet side, but Mike [Westmore] didn't have the money or time to go further than he did. I think you have to be careful when you start putting whiskers on things so they don't get real close to being an obvious puppet, as with [the Ewoks] in George Lucas's film — which I thought were a little too much like something you'd get if you knocked over six bottles at the pier."

Bole remembers some controversy over the story's ending, where one of the delegates is killed and cooked. "We were going for shock value, and we got a lot of response; some good, some bad. A lot of the syndicators didn't like it for some reason."

Brilliant Q

The director's next episode was *Hide and Q*, which featured the return of the enigmatic Q, played by John DeLancie. Bole has high regard for the talents of the popular guest star. "He's brilliant. John brings a lot to the screen, and the character is fun because you can do anything with him. I took John to Australia to do a *Mission: Impossible* for me, and we almost did a Western together, but that didn't pan out. I've done a couple of Q shows, including last year's *Q-Pid*, which was fun."

Bole followed up *Hide and Q* with *Conspiracy*, a controversial episode which was heavily censored in Britain because of graphic violence. While the director agrees that some moments, such as the



The Royale Last minute inspiration and Brent Spiner saved the day when resources were scarce

destruction of the alien queen, may have been more violent than viewers were used to seeing, he believes the criticism may have been too excessive on both sides of the Atlantic.

"We got a lot of bad press on that because it was television. Because some of the stations are in the syndicated market, you don't get one man from a network calling up and saying something. It comes in spurts from the market place. There was some reaction over here, but I wasn't aware that it was so heavy in England."

"I think it was over-reaction, especially for Science Fiction. I still believe in the fact that if you don't like something, you can turn it off. When you're a captive audience in a theatre, you seem to get a little more mesmerized before you can get the moral courage to walk out, but to turn off a television set now doesn't take much

effort at all."

The director feels that the negative reaction to *Conspiracy* during the first season may have affected subsequent episodes, in terms of the allowed levels of violence. In retrospect, would the director have changed anything?

"No I wouldn't," he states emphatically.

Vegas in Space

Bole's first episode for season two was *The Royale*, an off-beat story set in an alien re-creation of a Las Vegas gambling casino. Although the director includes several episodes of the casino-bound series *Vegas* on his résumé, he insists his involvement with *The Royale* was, pardon the expression, sheer luck.

"It was a pick of the draw, and it was to their good fortune and mine that I had

Ensigns of Command Not the director's finest hour. "I've got to put that down as my worst episode," says Bole





The Emissary Suzie Plakson, a big girl who went too far?



The Hunted Vietnam allegory with Jeff McCarthy

spent a lot of time at the tables. That was a show that was really conceived, written and done within a week, or less than that. As much as that was our little 'bottled' last-minute show, it's gotten a lot of response. Brent Spiner really helped me when we were sitting on the stage, saying 'Oh Boy, what can we do here?'

The original script, penned by Tracy Torme, was heavily rewritten because of budgetary considerations. "The [original] was incredibly more expensive," Bole confirms, "and when it couldn't be done, we started to re-do it, giving it a whole new concept."

"The revolving door was a budget thing. I remember they were trying to find a way to make an entrance, and I said, 'If you look at every one of those casinos, they have a revolving door in the centre to keep the atmosphere in and out', and that's what happened. They did the same thing on *Citizen Kane*. There was no money to build a set, so they just put a stairway in black limbo, and lit it like there might be a castle around it."

Despite the money problems, Bole thinks *The Royale* was a worthwhile effort.

"I enjoyed the hell out of it!" he exclaims. "One of the fellows in it was hot off *Good Morning Vietnam*, and it was a little character piece that was fun to do. I did two conventions a couple of years

ago, and I think I got more questions about that one than any other show — apart from *The Best of Both Worlds*."

Klingon Love

The Emissary followed, featuring Suzie Plakson as Worf's love interest, K'Ehlyr. As Bole recounts, the show was looking to cast a woman with impressive qualities in the part.

"Certainly someone to match the concept of a Klingon with that size and power, and Suzie certainly did. She's a big lady, and she matched all the physical qualities, plus she's a good actress. She has a good comedy sense too. Dramatically, I think I let her step a couple of inches over in character; I should have held her down a bit."

"That was a good show. Michael [Dorn] did a great job. They worked well together, and I had a little fun with that love scene where we came up with that thing about their digging in the palms. God knows what they do when they make love!"

The Ensigns of Command, Bole's first episode for the third season, was not the director's finest hour.

"I've got to put that down as my worst episode," he confesses. "I take responsibility for a lot of it. I could have done better with the actors. It was horribly mis-

cast for the lead; we even re-voiced him. I also had to cut way back on the set, and I should have asked to light it differently. It was the first show for a new cameraman, so there were a lot of elements to deal with."

Cutbacks

Bole fared better with *The Hunted*, an allegory of the problems suffered by Vietnam veterans.

"That was the soldier of fortune one. The fellow who had the lead, Jeff McCarthy, was in the road show of *Les Misérables*. He did a great job."

"We were going to have a more tumultuous ending. It was going to have an overthrow and a huge fight, but we had to contain it for budgetary reasons. I thought it was a great character study, there were nice effects in it, and I'm proud of that show."

The director approved of the Vietnam overtones of the story, pointing out that one of the enjoyable aspects of the series is the ability to tell such stories.

"I think the allegory is a great concept for *Star Trek*, because regardless of how time goes, you still have the human element, and I think it's going to play that way. The weapons change, but the mentality stays the same."

In *A Matter of Perspective* the same



A Matter of Perspective The accussor...



A Matter of Perspective ... and the accused

story is told from three different viewpoints on the Holodeck, as Riker is put on trial for the murder of an alien scientist.

"That's the old Japanese trilogy *Rashomon*, the story seen in three different ways. I'll tell you: technically, that was probably one of the tougher shows I've done, from nobody knowing what the hell I had in mind, and saying 'Oh God, where are we here?' Everybody, includ-

ing the script supervisor, lost total continuity, and it was a difficult show to shoot."

Despite the logistical problems of the story, Bole is relatively satisfied with it. "It had a few problems with the casting, but I don't think that's even worth mentioning. You can't hit it perfectly every time, but I think that show worked very well. More work goes into something like

that because you have to shoot one story in seven days, but don't forget I still had to shoot it three different ways, so it cubed everything that had to be done, everything to the third power. That can be tough on a director."

Bole had an easier time with *Hollow Pursuits*, which he considers to be one of his two or three best episodes.

"It was Fantasy, and I enjoy that part of story telling, the escapism. It had some nice sword fighting, and we built a beautiful set for it."

Bole attributes much of the episode's success to actor Dwight Schultz, who plays Barclay, the mild-mannered crewman who lives out his fantasies on the holodeck. "He's a marvellous actor. He's very accomplished, and brings a lot to the day's work. I'm sure *The A-Team* didn't challenge him at all."

While Bole enjoyed the escapism of *Hollow Pursuits*, he admits it will never top his finest effort to date. "I can't compete with *The Best of Both Worlds*. That was the best show I've ever done, and I haven't drawn one since, comparatively speaking, that would be anywhere near it."

Joe Nazario

(Cliff Bole talks further about *The Best of Both Worlds*, and other episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, in TV Zone issues #40 and #41.)

Hollow Pursuits Barclay clashes swords with his very own holodeck version of Captain Picard



TV Zone Specials

Special #1 - Sold Out

Special #2 (25 Years of Star Trek very short supply) £10 (US\$20) Doctor Who: FPCP Attack of Cybermen: Dr. Pen Jinkyard: FPCP Resurrection Dukes Exploding Dalek: Flash-back Attack of the Cybermen: Francis: Jim: Interview Visual Effects-Hitch Hiker B7 DWI: Hitch Hikers Guide... FPCP Explot Bodeboron: Space 1999: Feature Series overview: Star Trek: FPCP City on the Edge of Forever: Edith Keeler (Joan Collins) and Captain Kirk: Feature 25 years of the series: Feature Enterprise NCC1701: NCC1701D+: Feature City on the Edge of Forever: Original script: Interview: Arnold: Richard: Archivist (reprint): Poster: Photo's: Ship: Belins scenes (A3): Star Trek: The Next Generation: Bio File Guinan: Bio File Pulaski, Dr. Katherine: Bio File O'Brien, Miles: Bio File Tric: Lexaxans: Bio File O: Episode Guide Season 1: (complete, reprints): FPCP First Contact: Picard & Mirasta: Wragg: Peter: Interview SFX-Dr Who: Red Dwarf.

Special #3 (Cult TV - The Sixties, short supply) £5 (US\$10) 1960-1967: Cult Years: 1968-1969: Cult Years 1: Avengers: Poster: Steel & Tara King (A3): Bewitched: FPCP Samantha, Danni: Tabitha & Adam: Feature Series overview: Doctor Who: FPCP Padbury, Wendy: Interview Taylor, Gerald-Actor Dalek Operator: Interview Padbury, Wendy-Actress Zoe: Lost in Space: FPCP Dr. Smith: FPCP Maureen, Judy & Penny Robinson: Interview Harris, Jonathan-Actor Dr Smith: Mission: Impossible: Feature

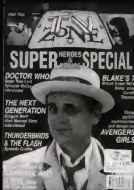
Series overview: Out of the Unknown: Flashback Machine Slips (reprint): Star Trek: Feature Whitney: Grace: Line-Actress: J Ranc: Thunderbirds: Interview Wragg: Peter SFX: Twilight Zone (original black and white series): Cult Years People Are Alike All over: Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea: FPCP Televisions by the airlock: Interview Heddon, David: Actor: Captain Cranet:

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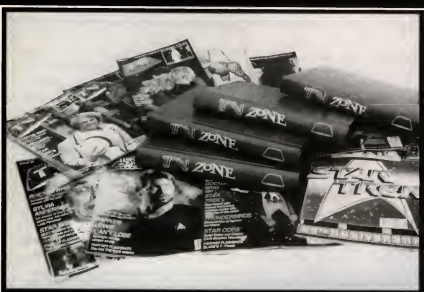
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SHERLOCK HOLMES

BELIEVE it or not, Sherlock Holmes has been portrayed more times on screen than any other character, real or fictional. His nearest rivals are Napoleon, Dracula, Christ and Frankenstein — in that order — but the gaunt Victorian detective beats them all with around 200 appearances in films and tv movies around the world, and that doesn't even include episodes of television series or serials. What is the attraction of this misogynous, emotionless relic from a bygone age?

Holmes was first portrayed on stage in 1893 by Charles Brookfield, only seven years after Arthur Conan Doyle first intro-

Keeping a Brett of the Series

Famous home and famous Holmes Photos © Granada tv

duced the character to an indifferent public. The first 'film' followed in 1900 — it lasted for 30 seconds and may have starred Walter Huston as the Great Detective (the first real film followed 5 years later, with Maurice Costello). The first radio series was broadcast in 1930, and the actor who portrayed Holmes — William Gillette — is the first man to have become identified with the part. Gillette played Holmes on stage and film as well, and Conan Doyle himself was very complementary over Gillette's performance, saying to him, the first time they met, "You are my Sherlock Holmes!". Alas, Gillette never managed to complete the set by portraying Holmes on television — a medium which had caught up with the character in 1937, with Louis Hector in the rôle.

The Finest Holmes

Among the many actors who have played Sherlock Holmes, only a handful stand out as giving anything more than a good performance. Oddly enough, there seems to be a law that every generation shall have one, and *only* one, perfect Holmes. William Gillette gave way to Eille Norwood, who relinquished the rôle to Basil Rathbone, who handed it on to Peter Cushing, who gracefully abdicated the throne in favour of the Sherlock Holmes of today: Jeremy Brett.

As with most major television projects, getting *Sherlock Holmes* on screen was a combination of hard graft and good fortune. Michael Cox, a producer at Granada Television, first mooted the idea of an authentic, definitive Sherlock Holmes series to his bosses in 1980. The process of planning such a major project took almost two years, and the amount of money required to do it properly meant that finance from abroad had to be sought — and was



found from the WGBH TV station in Boston, USA. In February 1982, an experienced actor named Jeremy Brett was offered the part. Eight weeks later, the series was cancelled. The likelihood is that Granada, who were planning to start off with an adaptation of one of the best known Holmes stories — *The Sign of Four* — had got wind of a rival production set up by American producer Sy Weintraub. Weintraub planned on making a 13-part series of 90 minute films starring Ian Richardson as Holmes and starting with *The Sign of Four*. In the end, Weintraub only made that and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and Granada reactivated their series five months after cancellation, having chosen *A Scandal in Bohemia* as their opening show.

The First Series

A year and a half later, **The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** premiered on television with Brett as Holmes and David Burke as his sidekick and amanuensis Doctor Watson. The series ran to seven episodes, and was followed sixteen months later by a second series of six episodes. Michael Cox made his choice as to which stories to adapt based upon which he thought would make the most dramatic episodes. Unfortunately, this resulted in the series hopping back and forth over fifteen years of Holmes's life, but always looking as if it was set in the same year. The second series ended with the episode *The Final Problem*, in which Holmes and his arch-enemy Professor Moriarty plunge to their deaths at the



Holmes during the mystery of *The Last (Sussex) Vampyre*

A scene inside 221B from *The Master Blackmailer*
(from the story *The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton*)



Reichenbach waterfall (although three of the previous episodes were supposedly set after this happened).

Changes

Almost a year later, under the title **The Return of Sherlock Holmes**, and with Michael Cox moved up to Executive Producer and replaced as Producer by June Wyndham Davies, a third season consisting of seven more episodes was shown. David Burke had left to join the Royal Shakespeare Company by this time, and the rôle of Watson was filled by veteran actor Edward Hardwicke. Following a gap of almost a year, and just in time to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the publication of the first Sherlock Holmes story, a 2 hour version of *The Sign of Four* was broadcast. A short fourth season of four episodes was followed closely by another 2 hour film, this time of probably the best known Holmes tale of all — *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The fifth series — now oddly entitled **The Casebook of**





Watson (Edward Hardwicke) unwittingly meets Holmes in *The Empty House*

Sherlock Holmes and with Michael Cox once more filling the Producer slot — returned to the six episode format, but that would appear to have been the swan-song for the series as such. Since that time, Brett has appeared as Holmes in three more TV movies — *The Master Blackmailer* (a retitled and expanded version of the short story *Charles Augustus Milverton*), *The Last Vampyre* (ditto for *The Sussex Vampire*) and *The Noble Bachelor*.

The initial episodes were perfectly faithful to the Conan Doyle stories. This made them slow: adapting a short story to fit a fifty-minute timeslot required either a lot of padding or a leisurely pace, and Michael Cox chose the leisurely pace. June Wyndham Davies, his successor, allowed a slight flexibility in the adaptations, with elements more contemporaneous than Conan Doyle creeping in. The rot, if that's how you see it, started with *The Red Headed League*, the last but one episode in the second season. It came immediately before *The Final Problem*, in which Holmes confronts Professor Moriarty for the first and last time, and acts as a scene setter. The implication is that the bank robbery central to *The Red Headed League* has been set up by Moriarty, and when it is foiled by Holmes, Moriarty vows revenge. Run credits, and wait for next week, when an entire new sub-plot

concerning fake Mona Lisas has been grafted onto the original for some inexplicable reason. Perhaps due to the lack of protest, a freer hand is detectable in the following seasons, combining with Jeremy Brett's more relaxed interpretation of Holmes to take the series from good to great. Recently, with the necessity of adapting short stories of the usual length into a TV slot which has doubled, the production team have had to add a lot of extra material in to fill the extra time.

Masterful Brett

No matter whether the story is adapted or invented, Jeremy Brett's performance is masterfully unique. Unlike previous actors, who have tried to find the humanity in the man, Brett seems to take Holmes as far away from anything sympathetic or enviable as possible. His vision of the man is a collection of nervous ticks and exaggerated gestures which, if he was playing any other rôle, would be counted as about as hammy a performance as it's possible to get. Playing Holmes, it succeeds. Brett makes of Holmes a vulnerable, wounded man who hides behind his genius and cannot admit his friendship to Watson. Brett may have been helped in the formulation of his performance by the memory of his performance as Doctor Watson on stage

The Illustrious Client in *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*





David Burke and Jeremy Brett as seen in the original opening titles

opposite Charlton Heston's Sherlock Holmes in the 1974 US stage production *The Crucifer of Blood*. (Oddly enough, Brett is not the first actor to have played both Holmes and Watson. Kenneth Rivington played both parts on stage in the 1920s.)

The Two Watsons

David Burke, the first foil to Brett's Holmes, played Watson as a solid, intelligent and reliable man. Unlike Watson's previous incarnations — "hail fellow well met" types with hardly two brain cells to rub together, forever amazed by Holmes's deductions, forever cowed by his superciliousness — Burke's friendship with Holmes was a relationship of equals, and his skill as an actor is no more evident than in his last scene (the closing moments of *The Final Problem*) where he turns to camera and delivers a tear-jerking soliloquy to "the best and wisest man whom I have ever known". Edward Hardwicke, who replaced Burke when he left the series in order to join the Royal Shakespeare Company, plays Watson as an older man, warm and friendly, and tolerant of Holmes's foibles. Both actors developed a chemistry with Brett that is obvious on screen. With many of the Holmes and Watsons of the past it is difficult to imagine them having a home life outside the confines of the plot. With Brett and Burke, and Brett and Hardwicke, we feel that

each case is an intrusion upon a cosy, firelit camaraderie.

What of the future? Well, of the 60 short stories and novels in which Sherlock Holmes appears, only 34 have starred Jeremy Brett. Plenty of scope there for future series, and the creation of an entirely original "mini-mystery" for Holmes, which

was transmitted during the ITV telethon in 1992, indicates that if the production team run out of stories they can always generate their own. After all, if Peter Cushing could make a Sherlock Holmes film when he was 70, then Jeremy Brett can keep going for a good few years yet.

Andrew Lane

Edward Hardwicke and Jeremy Brett in *The Last (Sussex) Vampire*



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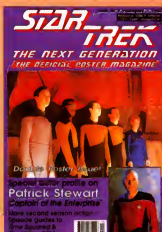
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